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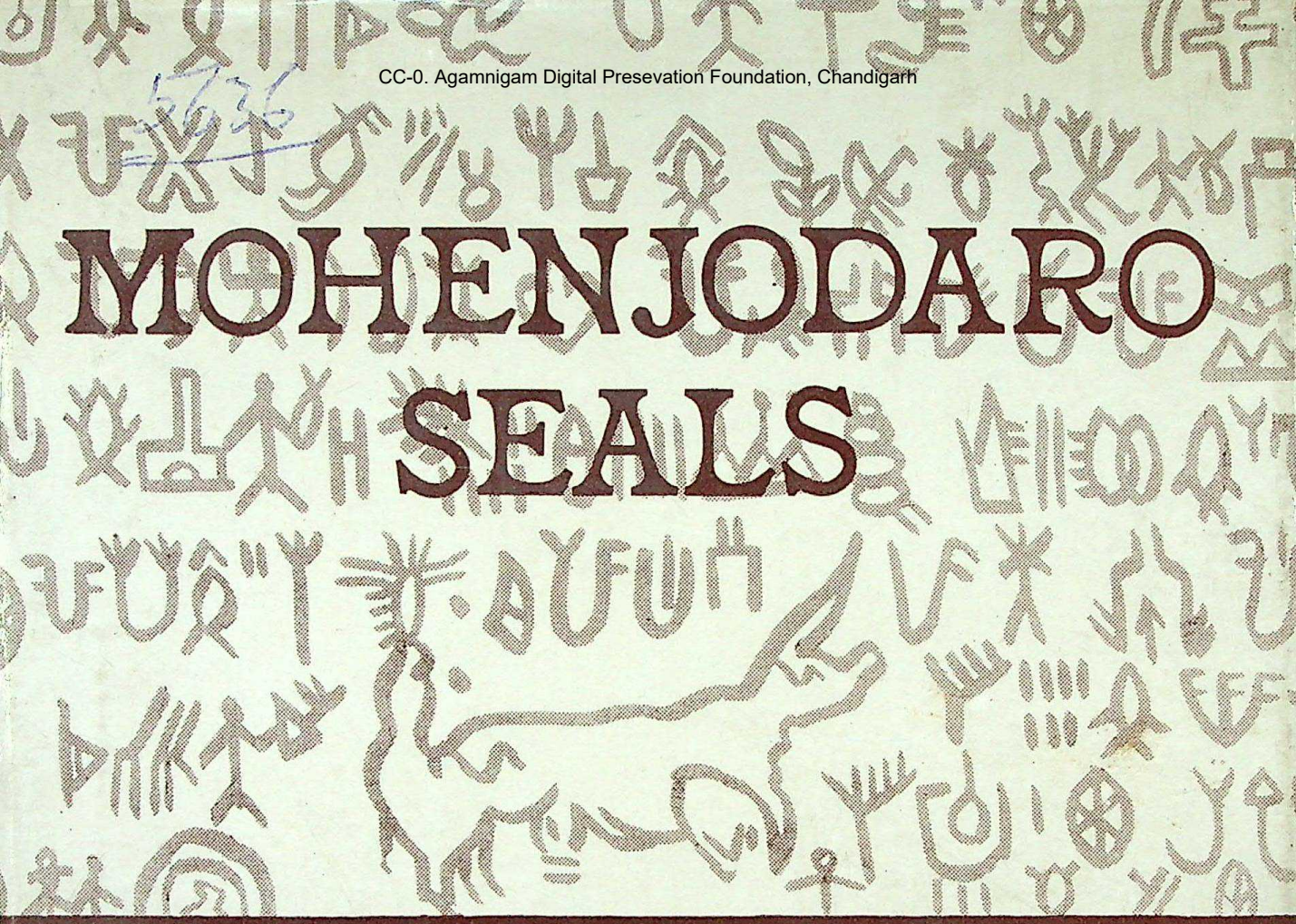

MOHENJODARO SEALS

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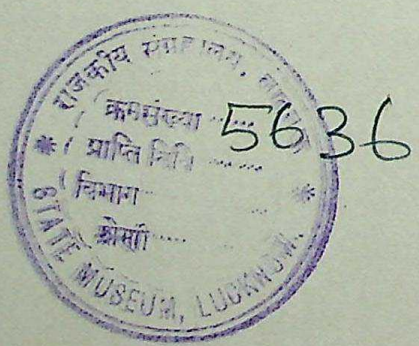

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Dedicated
To
Mrs Veena Purohit and Mrs Sumanlata Joshi

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Preface

When I was engaged in a UGC research project on *Harijan Contribution to Medieval Indian Thought*, I turned to Indus seals for background material and developed obsessive interest in them. Waddell, Pargitter and Dr. S.R. Rao's works, though severally unsatisfactory, in fusion helped me to live and breathe ancient India. Now, I am well on the way to completing my work on *A General Theory of Indo-European Epigraphy*.

I acknowledge my indebtedness to the above pioneers and several others mentioned in the book for secondary material. My special thanks are due to Dr. K.V. Ramesh, Dr. A.V. Narasimha Murthy, Dr. S.H. Ritti, Dr. B.K. Gururaja Rao, Dr. Ha Ma Nayak eminent scholars, for timely help. Dr. K. Raghavendra Rao and Late Dr. D.R. Bendre Special thanks are due for the patient help of Sri Sitaram Jahagirdar in carrying out diacritical marks.

The book is dedicated to my two daughters. At midnight of the eve of the elder daughter's wedding, the last page of the MS was completed. My wife and brother-in-law bore the burden, setting me free for work.

Shankar Mokashi Punekar

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Key to the Aksapada Alphabet

The author submits that the present perplexity of epigraphists (whether Indus script is Aryan or Dravidian) is natural. Indus seals use Akṣapada script from which Nagari, Brahmi, South Indian, Middle East and European systems of alphabet were derived, with the sole exception of cuneiform. The author doubts even these exceptions. After a good deal of search, he has gathered sufficient material to propose a basis for Indo-European unified model for epigraphy. There are some gaps which might require a few months or years of search. Mere comparison of various scripts will not suffice. The author cannot accept Mr. G.R. Driver's theory of degenerate words as originating alphabets. Alphabets all over the world were based on certain assumptions whose actualisation varied from language to language. Panini's perfected Nagari devalued Akṣapada script which continued till Alexander's invasion. It evolved its own calligraphy, visual *doubles entendres* and system of suggestion.

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Indus Signs

NAGARI	ENGLISH	
अ	a	U (Also pronounced as इ and य, vide Macdonell)
आ	ā	[sign] (Morefrequent than the next)
अ	a	U, ¢ [sign] (The last more frequent in Brahmi)
अ	a	I Ligalure Also used for short Guna. also, Anuswara
आ	ā	I " The first is medial The second is use to denote Vriddhi for patronyms.countries.etc
इ, य	i, y	₹.U,U, \
उ, व	u v	▽, [sign] /
)ए	ay ei	[sign], ‹‹ (when preceded by Vriddhi sign आय I signalso indicate ए logographically
ओ	o	[sign] [sign] (when preceded by Viriddhi sign आव
ऐ	ai	[sign]
औ	au	[sign] Ligature ⌐
आ...आ	ā ā	¦ ¦ Denotes extent, sequenee; also burial of a.person dead

क	k	V U, [sign] V ||
ग	g	Γ, ||, Λ, ^ .'|
घ	gh	// \
च	c	E, ?
ज	j	[sign], [sign]. [sign]
त	t	⋏, +, ⋏⋏⋏
थ	th	O, ⊝
द	d	D, ▷, [sign]
न	n	h, ✓, ∽
प	p	), (, [sign], O
ब	b	□, ◡, [sign]
भ	bh	[sign], [sign], [sign], [sign]
म	m	∝ , [sign]
य	y	≋ (Logo यमक

Infrequently used

छ	chh	[sign] [sign]
झ	jh	[sign] [sign]
ट	T	[sign] [sign]
ड	d	♡ ◇
ण	ṅ	[sign] [sign] [sign]
फ	Ph	[sign]

ΔΔΔ [sign] Logo for आदि

卐 Logo स्व

र	r	[sign], [sign], [sign]
ल	l	[sign], [sign]
व	v	Y, [sign], [sign], [sign], O
श	s'	[sign], ↑,
ष	s	[sign]
स	s	[sign], [sign], [sign] [sign]
ह	h	[sign] [sign] [sign] [sign] (used as ligature to convert hard consonant to mediel)
क्ष	Ks	[sign] [sign] Logograph for Kshelrajna
त्र	tr	[sign] [sign] Logograph for TriViKrama
		[sign] Logo, for Vamana used for both As Vrsha. used for Rishi also
		[sign] Logo for Srnga, denotes श्री Signalso
		[sign] Logo for अ श्व थ

		Numeralsare often used Phonetically to the neares Phonetic Value
एक	one	I, also ligature for ए
द्वा	Two	II, also द्विव, etc

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PART I

Philosophy and Methodology

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I. BACKGROUND AND GENERAL INTRODUCTION

This is an attempt to read the first hundred Mohenjodaro "seals" in the order in which they have been arranged by Sir John Marshall in his *Mohenjodaro and the Indus Civilization*. The method adopted is the one suggested by Dr. S.R. Rao in his improved key (*vide* mimeographed *Language and the Writing of the Indus Valley People* : this is not available in the market. I am grateful to Dr. Ritti for lending me the pamphlet. The earlier key of Dr. Rao published in the *Andhra University Journal* contained some serious errors, such as the interpretation of the 'fish' sign as 'L' instead of 'Sha'. He has added some more useful signs, besides rectifying these errors in his later day LWIVP). In spite of this, there are some serious lacunae, in his method. I have added some eight more signs. But, more important is the addition of *Vṛddhi*, extensively used by the "Indus" scribes, especially in the formation of patronyms. (This is a typical behaviour of Indo-Aryan languages, but should not be mistaken for the strict systematised Pāṇinian vṛddhi; Pāṇini was born 2600 years later). The coming pages will demonstrate that the "Indus" script cannot be fully known from the seals. The seal-makers' technology, the stock stamp they used, the need for attempting and finishing before the slab dried up, the arrangement of alphabets on the stamps, and many other necessary and convenient short-cuts, arts of legend composition and *doubles entendres* for grace, irony or economy, led the scribes to use a cryptic approximate transcription, not a phonetically accurate one. Nevertheless, the book broadly endorses Dr. Rao's key. Far more serious is my difference with Dr. Rao on the philosophy of the seals. Dr. Rao, inspite of his superior method of decipherment, persists in the notion that a separate "Indus" civilization, other than the Vedic "golden age" existed; that it was localised; and that it was different from the general Indian civilization. This book demonstrates that this theory is wrong. Both chronology and the discovery of new "Indus" sites should have proved this. But these readings will conclusively prove that no

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other civilization existed. This book endorses L.A. Waddell's philosophy (in a moderated form). Dr. Rao's success in decipherment mainly springs from his greater discipline in picking up similar signs current contemporaneously within a limited geographical area. Waddell was an excessive, extravagant tyrant; but, in essence, and shorn of its extravagant details and ramifications, he had a much sounder philosophy of the seals. (*Indo-Sumerian Seals Deciphered*, 1926). His belief that there was a single Eurasian source of all past legend and from that race one off-shoot went to Mesopotamia, one to Greece, one to India, and one to Norway and England, was a passion with him. He denounced "Assyriologists", but their patient work was found useful later. Waddell's own syllabic method was unsuccessful. He was quietly eclipsed. But his philosophy has some element of truth in it. At the least, a few pre-historic legends seem to issue from a common racial memory. His literal beliefs came in the way of his seeing the facts objectively. Stripped of these extravagancies, there is much that Waddell shares with another junior *savant* of the middle twenties of this century F.E. Pargitter. Pargitter's classic work *Ancient Indian Historical Tradition* attempts to read history in the Purāṇas. On this work, my own interpretation is based. For specialised material, I have depended on a few Purāṇas, and secondary sources like the other *Vedic Index* (Macdonnell and Keith), *Prāchīna Charitra Kosha* (Siddhēshwara S'astrī Chitrāv) and *Purāṇa Bhārata Kosha* (Y.N. Udupa). The philosophy, however, I owe to Waddell and Pargitter. But, both stop short at the end of the Golden Age; I have suggested a theory of what followed, *viz.*, the 'Dark Age' of 1050 years.

This book, therefore, may be described as an integration of the Waddell-Pargitter philosophy with Dr. Rao's methodology. The philosophy can be stated thus: With all exaggeration and mythification, Purāṇas attempt to record a history of actual events which belong to the Vedic age. This age begins with the first batch of Indian kings known as Manu's sons. It roughly ends with the Mahābhārata war, or more accurately, the death of Janamejaya II. Events after this belong to what is described as "future", *i.e.*, 'The Dark Age' of 1050 years. Mahābhārata war occurred by about 1400 B.C. Some of the

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earliest events might have happened in Mesopotamia (but we have to discount Waddell's notion that Sagara was Sargon). Its memory was carried to India. The later history was carefully preserved by a community known as Sūtas, whose professional duty was to memorise the geneologies of kings and important people. Vedic hymns and the history preserved by Sūtas, was compiled by the end of the Vedic Age by Vedavyāsa (whose first name was Dwayapayana, according to his own seal here), and his pupils. This compilation, for a time, curtailed the addition to history. This was followed by a "dark age" (see comments on seal 14 and 82), lasting according to *Matsyapurāṇa*, for 1050 years. This "dark age" was marked by greater self-awareness among the tribes and regions resulting in geo-political disintegration during a non-technological age. Great empires are built in a primitive age for the lack of resistance from people who are not aware of their distinct identities. Mahābhārata war created a new geo-political self-awareness; tribalism increased as an outcome of this awareness. Travel became difficult; self-expression or the institutional basis for it was gone; the earlier secure "age of innocence" broke up and the wherewithal for a new institutionalism was not yet born. But the silent cultural life continued to flourish in a dream-like non-political way and added myth and legend to the same history of the Vedic age, treating contemporary kings of small states with contempt. It was during this apolitical post-Vedic "dark age" that some semblance of Indian unity was maintained by the rise of new worships and cults like those of Nakulīsha, Dattātreya, Ayyappan (Seals 90, 93, 99) which sprang up. (Māhesha and Pāñcharatra were a little earlier). Peace came with Buddhism. The rise of Buddhism and the philosophy of Ahimsa once again threw open the petty borders of tribes for travel. New forms of self-expression began to come forth, *viz.*, Indo-Hellenic art, Prakrit literature, *etc.* Again, the new situation made India soft like wax, which resulted in the establishment of a 'central' power in Delhi by the Nandas. This started a new age of compilations of myth and legend we know as Purāṇas (4th and 3rd c. B.C.). But the myth itself belonged not to the "dark age" but to the previous age, which we prefer to call Vedic; but which scholars describe as a separate Indus civilization. In other words,

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Purāṇas recorded the history of the 'Golden Age' as they found it. Much fanciful romanticised myth and legend had surrounded it during the 'dark-age'. Yet, the grist around which these myths grew are also preserved. This hard core comprises historical events of the Vedic age. The geneologies of the "dark age" have been preserved too, but nominally and with overt contempt. But names and geneologies are all we need for reading seals. This will necessitate a belief that for a thousand years, Indians had no political life and kept dreaming of the Vedic golden age, decorating it with myths which it could hardly bear. But, if we remember that Europe too had a "dark age" lasting nearly the same duration, this theory will not look too implausible. Purāṇas record the events of the Vedic age as they were handed down by oral tradition, *i.e.*, clothed in myth. We have to discount the myth, confusions of names, and genuine failures of memory, on the part of the Sūtas. Further, in the Hindu protest against Buddhism, the 4th and 3rd century Purāṇiks greatly extended the written records left by Vyāsa and his associates. The sūtas added their own rich fancy in their hurry to give a ready answer to the gurus and maṭhādipatis to whom they recounted these ancient tales, *e.g.*, Ikshwāku was born when Manu sneezed'. But we have to accept the truth of the geneologies after removing these exaggerations. Recently, Dr. Corder of Toronto University has been working on the same lines and building up a theory of Indian historiography.

By Pargitter's averages, this "Vedic period" makes a solid alive age of nearly 1900 years. To this if we add the pre-Nanda dark ages, it would be about 2900 years' removed from the start of Indian history. Thus, we have to posit the theory that the 4th c. B.C. Purāṇikas and compilers recorded the history of 1900 years, themselves removed from it by a thousand years, employing the legendary verses and ballads and Mahābhārata as their source material. If all this appears incredible, one can only say that even later, almost upto the present day, the average Indian continues to be emotionally involved with the same creative and expressive Golden Age, though he himself is removed from it by 4000 years. It is not for nothing that recently Richard Lannoy in his fine study of Indian culture titled

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The Speaking Tree stresses the continuity of Indian tradition. He considers it as the mental environment which shapes Indian thought and art to this day. The easy conclusion that Indians are backward looking is not quite a relevant subject for discussion here. What people do with their memory has to be judged by how they use it. They might name their space satellite as "Aryabhata", for instance.

This may look very much like Pargitter's philosophy of Indian history in a slightly modified form. But these seals again and again confirm it. Where Purāṇic evidence has contradicted Pargitter, we have unhesitantly adopted Pargitter as our authority.

The term "Indus Civilization" is outmoded now. Many new sites have been spotted; some of them lie deep in the interior farther from Harappa by nearly a thousand miles. The term should have been a dead letter by now. However, the term persists and continues to play a semantic trick with scholars. It is here that our main difference with Dr. Rao arises. His two essays seem to be based on the prevalent theory that there is some special civilization distinct from the general Indian civilization. Our reading of the seals convinces us that there is no such special civilization; and we propose that to the same period of 1900 years the Seals belong. They merely confirm the bare facts recorded in the Vedas and the Purāṇas in a different way. For purposes of chronology, Vedas are not very useful. For that we can only depend on linguistic and stylistic evidence. As for the Purāṇas, we can depend only on geneology and some events reduced to barest facts (*e.g.*, the 10-King war) and discard all fanciful or improbable descriptions. We have to discount the story that King Takshaka hid himself as a worm in a fruit, and killed Parikshit. At the same time, we can reconstruct the political history of this assassination from these seals. Takshaka might have sent a poisoned fruit, or hired assasins, possibly a strangler, and got Parīkshit killed. Fanciful details of Purāṇic account may not be reliable; but facts are. Pargitter has graded the Purāṇas according to their reliability, and places Vāyu and Brahmāṇḍa as reliable. Those which he discards as unreliable, we too have generally discarded. But, these seals record contemporary history. For instance, one of the seals shows that Takshaka performed a religious rite before undertaking his enter-

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prise, but refused to mention to the priests its purpose. Such evidence brings back to life the truth of the Purāṇic record; and here, the reading or misreading is the only test. So too, the seals throw light on King Trasadasyu's life not clearly recorded in either Purāṇas or the Vedas. But they make alive the entire predicament of the king. They even help us to understand his 'obscure' verses in the Ṛgveda on which great European scholars (who ignored Purāṇas) have bungled.

In other words, we propose to use the seals for the reconstruction of the history of that golden age, and a few following years.

For instance the Vedic society was, in a sense, a casteless society. Caste was not based on birth, but on profession. The king could be a kshatriya, his brother a brahmin, his uncle a Śūdra. Though these comminglings in the same family have been mentioned in Vedas, Brāhmaṇas and Purāṇas, the modern Indian has ignored them. We are even told of a Sudra ṛshi named Kavasha who presided over a sacrifice; Indians have not taken these things seriously. But, in these seals we get solid evidence that such Kavasha existed and presided over a royal rite. We know that a fisherman named Tugra composed some Vedic verses; and we thought that it was an allegory. But, here we have the record of the sacrifice he performed. That liberal age comes back to life. In fact, with some more supporting evidence, we can pinpoint the years when caste based on birth was established in India, *viz.*, a few decades after Bashkali, the pupil of Vyāsa lived. At the least, we can say with confidence that caste based on birth was the product of the "dark age" when tribes developed self-awareness and insisted on their separate identity, after the collapse of the central power at Hastināpura.

Thus, these seals help us to re-structure India's golden age and its aftermath, to some extent.

II

We can, to some extent, guess the script used by the seal-makers but not the Harappan script. What is known is uncertain. It is a phonetically artificialy script, very much modified by the visual needs and calligraphic ingenuities.

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It is a futile task to reconstruct the language of the seals. Out of the lot of 101 seals, hardly two seem to use complete sentences. The rest of them are names and patronyms. Possibly, after all the 4,000 available seals are read, we might get a hundred sentences on which we could reconstruct a rudimentary "grammar" of the Harappan language. I suspect that will never be. But before these cryptic verbless bare names and patronyms were written, there must have existed more primitive seals on which the proud kings got complete sentences written recording their deeds. The fact that some sacrifices belong to distant Maṇipur and one to Pampa in the South, among these hundred and one seals, suggests that there are more sites where the "Indus seals" could be found. The hope that the government of Pakistan might take interest in these ancient records seems remote. It is time, archaeologists tried out sites elsewhere, especially round Dwāraka. Dwāraka has given some very interesting seals here; not that they are pretty; they are not, inspite of their superior lettering and enamel. Their chief interest is that many belong to commoners, *e.g.*, Garuḍa who describes himself as a night-watchman; and two anonymous elephant guards whose 80th and 86th birthdays were celebrated by their guild; or a vessel merchants' guild of 1,000 members; or of some irate carpenters. They were not paid wages and their guild found that they had no legal remedy. They then performed a religious rite drawing curses on their master. The fact that Alexander had seen some of these seals, is evident. Misled by the pretty leaf decoration of the horse-mark on the seals he gave the impression to Herodotus and Thucidides that India had unicorns. This suggests that the tradition of seal-making continued till the 3rd century B C. We have to find these latter-day seals also. The hundred and one seals we have read prove beyond a shadow of doubt that though they were discovered in Mohenjo-Daro, they have little to do with the ruins of that name. Only one seal appears, rather inconclusively, to belong to a Mouni king of Kilkila (*i.e.*, Mohenjo-Daro, which was as much a ruin then as it is now). He tried to place his seal among the seals of Ikshwakus and Bhagirathas to prove his antiquity. This king was a usurper. The skeletons of murdered people found near wells is the evidence to the fact that he forcibly occupied the ruins of Mohenjo-

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Daro and set a petty princedom whose sole possession was the fortification. This is amply stated in the Purāṇas. He took Kilkila soon after the downfall of Vṛshṇi dynasty. Samba, the son of Kṛishṇa, whose wild behaviour, as much as the irresponsibility of some of Krishna's sons, utterly ruined the Dwāraka kingdom. Our princeling from Kilkila seems to have collected these seals by bribing the starving geneologists and librarians of Dwāraka. Or else, Kilkila or Mouni-Dwara (Mohenjo-Daro) was outside the cultural heartland of India which produced these seals. But we must be grateful to this Pravīraka who, (Seal 78). In fact, he was not even a Mouni, but rather a pretender, after discovering that the last Mouni king died without successors, murdered, a few women who had come to the well, terrorised others, and established his rule. The 100 unburied skeletons which Wheeler romanticizes as "The Last Massacre" (Wheeler, *Op. cit.*, p.130, and Plate XXIII) is the work of this hoodlum. Secure in his isolation, he must have felt the need for a geneology. He added his own seal to this collection. Of course, the seals from Dwāraka can be interpreted as from Mouni-Dwāraka, but I do not think that is probable. All but this one come from various places all over India. Yādava kings and their cousins who ruled in distant Kāshi and Kuru-Pāñchala and *Pāṇḍya* kingdom in the South, had the main incentive to preserve the seals to keep themselves informed. The treasure passed on to this worthy of Kilkila and are today known as 'Mohenjo-Daro' seals.

III

What is a "seal"?—we must have a broad agreement on this word before any intelligent discussion is possible. These are not "seals" in the accepted sense of royal insignia. They are not all royal. They are tablets recording some religious rite performed both by kings and commoners. Some of these seals record even magical rites performed secretly to bring death or suffering to their enemies. A door-keeper of the Kṛimi kings of North Punjab has held such a rite. Most seals show the picture of a horse. The horse shows overt decorations, good or evil, according to the inten-

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tion of the performer. Even the script above is neat or illegible, according to the purpose of the performer.

Therefore, to understand the nature of the "seal", we have to understand the nature of the Indian rite. Here our best authority can be the critical and forthright outsider, A.B. Keith, whose monumental work *Religion and Philosophy of The Veda* has been employed for our authority. Keith is rather harsh and unsympathetic in his treatment of Indian literature and drama; but he shows a singular sympathy and understanding of the ritualistic aspects of Vedic literature. These hundred and one seals have convinced us, however, that in many respects, we have to take his account with a pinch of salt. He depends entirely on literary accounts of how a rite is held. His sources are latter-day works like *Pañchaviṁsha Brāhmaṇa*, *Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa*, *Jaiminiya Aśwamēdha*, *Kaushika*, *Shankhayana Śrauta-sūtra* and others. While his account is faithful to the source material, we have to filter it with our own knowledge of Indian habits and practices. We have to moderate his account. He rightly places the Indian Yajña in the religious rituals prevalent in other countries. What he ignores is the fact that even ritualistic life has its own history and the actual practice differs from the dead letter of the written word. The written word may be a nostalgic account (See *Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa*, for instance) of glorious rituals once seen, but now no longer held.

The picture of a decorated horse on each seal does not prove that all these seals record Aśwamedhas. An angry door-keeper could not have performed an Aśwamedha (horse-sacrifice) to bring scorpions in his boss' bed. Only one seal clearly states that a sixty-horse sacrifice was held by Ikshwāku. We have to go to the fundamentals of such rites to know what they were. Even Ikshwāku, who belongs to the first slab of kings in Pargitter's synchronistic list among these seal-owners could afford the sacrifice of 60 horses, that too to celebrate "a great accomplishment", because in his day, horses were readily available. Not even Trasadasyu, whose generosity is sung about in Ṛgveda, and who lived just 21 generations later, could not have dreamt of such an extravagance. From the seal of the horse trader or the two Shaibyas (Abyssinian merchants) who

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probably were horse-importers, we know how prosperous they were. Horse population of India was fast depleting and imported horses could have been fairly expensive even for kings. In his account of Aśwamedha rite, Keith himself says that a horse was not always used. In the same note he expresses surprise that 63 animals (including bees) were slaughtered and the number must have been an expensive proposition. But he continues blandly to state that some rites needed 100 horses and 1,000 gold pieces to be given in fee to the Brahmins alone. What these holy texts prescribe cannot be taken literally. They were written to memorise the complete rite getting obsolete in a more enlightened age of Araṇyakas and Upanishads. These could be held by very ambitious kings to establish their suzerainty, not others. The Aśwamedha of Yudhiṣṭira was such a rare occasion that he was careful enough to select knowledgeable priests.

Thus, while Keith is a useful companion for detail, we have to stress some aspects neglected in his account for a better understanding of these seals.

IV.

The prime principle of an Indian rite is DESIRE. It begins with a statement of this desire, 'Saṅkalpa'. In some of the seals, the term "Āśaika" states the particular desire. Many seals do not mention it. But that proves nothing. The sacrificer may not find it worth mentioning if it is a general desire for prosperity, welfare of children, increase of cattle, *etc.*, well within his reach. Even so, to his priest he has to declare it. Sometimes, the intentions are such that their public declaration defeats the purpose itself. Takshaka, for instance, desires to get Parikshita assasinated. Yet, he wants to stress the 'desire'. He does not mention it specifically. So his seal, merely states, "Ēkāśaikah", "for one specific purpose". Gods of sacrifice should not fritter their energy by giving him prosperity, but engage all their charisma towards fulfilling his sole desire. The brahmins who help him will not know the intention. The artisan who makes the seal (and in such cases, the seal made is ugly) can, may suspect something; but not the specific intent. Keith treats this first principle rather

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casually and works on detail, hardly paying attention to cardinal words like 'Saṅkalpa' or 'Adhikāra'.

Keith says that rites brought the desired result by "sympathetic magic". This is a total misunderstanding. It is based on Sir James Frazer and Egyptian magic. The Indian rite begins with the sacrificer's desire. It is desire which brings the "right" or "authority" to the sacrificer to perform a Yajña. There is utterly no evidence to show that the priests themselves muttered or strongly wished, or added their collective desire, or made the sum-total of such "desires" to issue like snakes towards the goal. Quite often, they were innocent of the evil intentions of the sacrificer. The rite was intended to demonstrate the serious intent of the sacrificer and helped him develop confidence through self-hypnosis produced during the rite. If ever the rite became successful in obtaining the desired goal, it was through the 'saṅkalpa-śakti' (power of desire) which succeeds by impersonalising itself as the support of pleased gods. The aim was to turn their will towards one's own. (It is this forcible driving of natural powers towards one's own desire which the Upanishads and the Geeta deprecate. They are not anti-ritualistic in the sense they disbelieve the efficacy of the sacrifice. Strictly, they were against small or wicked desire).

Then comes the second principle, the sacrificer. According to his means (Yathāśakti) must he bring the materials needed for the rite and reward the Brahmin within his ability. There are instances of kings having refused to perform certain rites mentioned by Keith. Since the entire rite is symbolic, it is not impossible to imagine that any other clean animal, or just the picture on the seal, could also have been used symbolically to perform the sacrifice. There are instances of sacrifices performed by poor men in which a dough-moulded image replaced the actual animal. The brahmin uttered "Sahasram dadyāt" with some hope no doubt. But knowing the sacrificer's economic condition, he would take even one coin, describing it in lofty Sanskrit as one hundred, and might bless the door-keeper to become the one-umbrellaed monarch of three worlds and along with it also bless him to get promoted as head door-keeper.

Only, some materials had to be got, such as bricks for the *vēdi*,

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kuśa grass, some grain, food, butter, which were needed for the rite, 'stōma'. Probably, rite with a destructive purpose was done outside the town in secrecy. The priests, too, must have been Atharva brahmins (they could not have been Magadhas) and even seal makers had to be reliable lest the secret purpose leak out. Purāṇas have it that with all due secrecy, Takshaka could not hide his intent; some Nāga brahmin who heard of his plan rushed to Parikshit's court to use his counter-magic against poison; but he was stopped half-way by Takshaka, given rich rewards and was sent back.

We have repeated the authority of the *Gita* that its protest is against such rites. These were based in desire which was re-inforced into an *Adhikāra* and a *Saṅkalpa*, by invoking the hidden powers of nature and thereby disturbed the order of the universe. Both, the rite and the protest are based on the same metaphysic,—that man's will is a slice of the universal order and can strengthen itself by invocation. *Gita* gives all support to general desires such as bringing down rain, *etc.*

The third important principle is Dhyāna or Pratisṭhāna (transference symbolism). The animal, a horse, a dough image of it, had to be imagined as oneself or as an enemy, according to the nature of the rite. In fact, this transference symbolism of the Yāga or Ukthya must have yielded easily to the Pāśupata heterodoxy of Nakulīśa cult. Two seals here show that the cult was borrowed from Scyths and established among the Nāga tribesmen of Kurujāṅgala after Takshaka's down-fall, a few decades after the Mahābhārata war. Nakulisha was easily Vedicised (Śatarudra), because Pas'u, Rope (Pāśa), *etc.*, were familiar symbols, and their content was changed to heterodoxy.

This brings us to the evidence of the *Patta* or the "seal" which once belonged to Aśvamēdha; but as kings reduced the bother of stōmas and yajñas (which involved their personal starvation for weeks, untold humiliation for the queens) priestly exterior collapsed. With the rise of Maṇḍala polity, the full-scale stōmas became less frequent; but the prosperous bourgeoisie and officials (Rajapurushas) of Vṛishṇi period seem to have performed small-scale less-publicised rites. In some cases, bereaved parents (one of whom had lost six children, probably in a battle or epidemic) performed a śānti (consolation) rite.

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Dwāraka, which seems to have been a jolly good place for the bourgeoisie, has records of such bourgeois rites. One of them belongs to a goblet-seller. In the interpretation of one seal, we have even suggested among other possibilities, that an aged prostitute (Sthavira-Vṛshi) might have been commemorated by her ex-lovers. I have read with great pleasure *Chaturbhani*, and though its plays belong to a much later age, (nearly 1800 years later), considering the continuity of Indian culture I cannot but feel that prosperous burghers of Kṛishṇa's Dwāraka could not but have been jolly good fellows as much as the burghers of Pataliputra of Ujjaini of *bhanas*. Elesewhere, I have drawn attention to the analogy of Dwāraka gates and those of 17th century Surat given by John Hawkins, an emissary of East India Company to the court of Akbar. In fact, Kṛishṇa's son Sāmba's (or Sampa's) description of himself as a playboy or funster (Maha-Hasa) gives us a clue to what Dwāraka had become during Kṛishṇa's long absence in his many diplomatic journeys to the capital of the central Kuru-Puru power in Delhi and later for the Mahābhārata war.

V.

Apte's Dictionary translated 'Paṭṭa' or 'Phalaka' as a tablet but it does not describe 'Patra' as one. *Vedic Index* does not include this term. There is a community of Paṭṭegars in Hubli. Most of them have Aryan names ending in Sā exactly as the seals have, *e.g.*, Paksa, Padsha. They belong to kshatriya clan. Most of them are literate, progressive businessmen and industrialists. There is evidence in *Jaiminiya Aśvamēdha* that Paṭṭas or Phalakas were tied to the forehead of the sacrificial horse. Keith says that it was allowed to roam for a year wherever it liked. The suzerainty of the sacrificer was established thus. Any king could challenge it by restraining the horse's movements. The horse was accompanied by 400 warriors, some of whom were the sacrificer's sons. Their responsibility was to see that its movements were never checked. In case, the horse was stopped, these soldiers fought and humbled the restrainer. The Phalaka announced the name of the sacrificer. Not restraining it, or welcoming it meant the acceptance of the suzerainty of the

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sacrificer. Wheeler has described the notches made at the back of these seals, presumably, to enable the tying of the Phalaka to the horse's forehead. We presume, later Phalakas were hung up in a library or museum or record room, along with the names of other rulers who accepted the suzerainty of the king. We could presume that India had a "central" power in this de-centralised way. Rāma's behaviour is characteristic. Soon after Rāvaṇa's killing, he crowned Aṅgada, his brother, and quietly left for home, as he did in the case of Sugriva. Often, suzerainty was established through marriages. Thus the blood alliance between powerful Pāñchāla kings and the Purus established the supremacy of the 'Central' power once for ever. That unified Pāñchāla and Puru lands under the Kuru dynasty later. Yadus too were related to Purus of Delhi and owed them fealty. If "vassal" kings fought between each other, the central powers took no interest. The simple reason was that such wars increased the power and prestige of the central power. We hear of no attack on Delhi ever made. At the same time, for citizens, the last court was the local king, not Delhi power. In the long Daśa Rājñi war between Kāśis, Ayodhyās and Pāñchālas, though relatives were involved, Purus of Delhi never intervened. The evidence of Trasadasyu's court battle with the Brahmins shows that a neighbouring friendly king arbitrated in such legal disputes between King and commoner. As the seal of the five carpenters (door-makers) shows, when law gave no remedy, a religious rite was performed to draw curses on the wrong-doer. At any rate, it is absolutely clear that there *was* a central power of the Purus, inviolable and sacrosanct, an ancient continuous dynasty, much revered in theory, which brought conceptual and emotional unity to India. Even Sagara did not attack Delhi, though had he, he would not have found it difficult to over-power it. But such thought simply did not occur to him. Pāṇḍavas were the first to challenge it, and from their point of view, justified. But there was equal justice on the side of Duryōdhana. His claim was that at no time was the unity and integrity of the Kuru-Puru land was ever harmed or divided between brothers, because it had a special "central" role to play. The Pāṇḍavas paid dearly for their transgression. Once the charisma of the "central" power was gone, they could

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only make their successors weak and subject to the same instability as any other king. Thus we find the Nāga king, Takshaka, threatening the borders of Hastināpura. Parīkshit succeeded in overpowering Takshaka militarily; but the charisma was gone. Hastināpura was one more of the several kingdoms in India. Thus followed the "dark age" of disintegration and lack of moral "central" authority.

The seals give us important clue to this politico-economic history. *But this should not mean that every sacrifice or rite was necessarily accompanied by a seal.* That would have made the seals too numerous. The random arrangement of Marshall's seals gives us a cross-section of about 2,000 years of India's life, and if we include Pravīraka, another 300 years. It begins with the 4-king treaty on which Manu himself presided and initiated the golden age of a "central" Hastināpur power (See seal No. 6). He must have been an old man then. Some of these kings must have been really his sons, though not all. He established a code of conduct, applicable to both kings and commoners; but his contribution, direct or indirect, was the establishment of the charismatic "central" power at Delhi. If all rites had their seals (and in the latter-day, these Vedic practices seem to have spread to Assam and the South (Pampa), we cannot be satisfied with an average of 2 seals per year, taking into account the 4,000 known seals. Their number must be larger. The fact that the *Vedic Index* includes neither Patta or Phalaka (but Keith mentions a "board") proves that seals did not form an essential part of the Vedic ceremony itself. Therefore, we would be very wrong if we expect an average of one seal per rite.

Therefore, we would be justified in expecting seals under the following circumstances only :

1. Royal yajñas on a large scale to establish prestige. Not to satisfy the seal-maker would then be in poor grace.
2. Leaders of guilds performing a sacrifice where money is not lacking and members might demand documentary evidence. That explains the seals got made on behalf of 1,000 door-makers, guards of the royal palace, or the elephant guards who celebrated the 80th and 86th birthday of two of their

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co-workers, *etc.*, Such 'Parases' (Parishads) are mentioned in the later inscriptions and copper-plates all over India, especially in the South. There was a guild of even Pragātha singers, *i.e.*, Bards.

3. Public repentance for some sin in the past. There is at least one seal of this nature among these 100 seals.
4. The seal of secret magical rite for the destruction of an enemy. The normal feature of six such seals is that the lettering is not made with the help of ready blocks nor the normal neat alignment is maintained. They are hand-carved, and rendered fuzzy and irregular. Often, the name of both the sacrificer and his victim is given in a code; and at least, in one seal, only the initials of four victims are mentioned; and the sacrificer is a Krimi (from North Punjab). We can imagine why a seal was necessary. (a) These seals generally show various weapons hurting the horse image; arrow, stick, buttock-plug, snake or scorpion, sometimes fish to suggest that the victim should get drowned and his body eaten by the fish. A seal was a better visual aid to build up the morale and self-expression of the dire hatred of the sacrificer. Probably, he carried the seal home and meditated on it to reinforce his will, after getting it sanctified. (b) Such rites were expensive and the sacrificer did not mind adding to its efficacy by a visual aid. A cloth image might adversely affect his own family; and a dough image had to be dissolved into water and could not be kept for long. (c) Such rites were performed under the supervision of Atharva gōtra brāhmins or Nāga brāhmins who must have had some monetary understanding with seal-makers of the magical inclination. We *have* to imagine some such guild understanding, because the magical brāhmaṇs and magical seal-makers were few in number, and both had to know the technique and requirement, shared taboos and other magical traditions. Both traditionally kept their secrets and would not have divulged the name of either the sacrificer or his victim. Even if they did, it did good to the sacrificer who

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would be looked upon with greater respect and fear by the victim, unless the enemity was such that he too performed a prophylactic sacrifice, and continued in his hatred, which was rare. In other words, the social process made magic effective and the priests got the credit.

4. The death of a son or a small baby required a seal for perpetuation of memory. We have no less than six such seals on 'papas' (babes). One of them actually mentions that the babe was thirsty; and died before milk, water or a suck was given.
5. Self-laudation. Yayāti had first exiled his sons who set up little dynasties. In his later days, he passed on the central power to Puru, his youngest son; but divided his dominions among his other sons by some satisfactory agreement with them. He had his past to wipe out, and one of the seals describes him as "a king who satisfied all his five sons". Similarly, one of Trasadasyu's seals declares that he avoids sin ('Pāpāpaha'). The reference is to the scandal that he had come to some unholy understanding with the judge, the Ikshwāku king, and made him pronounce judgment in his favour. (See below).
6. Public censure; public appeal for sympathy; spread of scandal: At least two seals are centred on the same ugly incident: that of Trasadasyu and Vṛsha. Vṛsha performed a sacrifice ostensibly wishing a brahmin named Simha a long life; the real purpose was to declare Simha to be the real father of the king. Trasadasyu replied to his denigrators with a seal showing a wild animal striding onwards with its eyes on two stars, and scorpions crawling on ground to catch up with him. (Seals 3 and 73). Tugra's seal may be of similar intent.
7. Public ceremonies like convocations, institutionalisation of new faiths; and in the early years of Parīkshit's death, construction of temples. We have at least two convocation seals; when Parāśaras declared themselves as pontiffs of law, or when Pañchatrika (or Parashikha) of Pampa declared the

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new faith, Pāñcharātra order, *etc.* For the first construction of Shiva temple (temples were not known till then) we have a seal (98). See below.

8. The writing of a book, the founding of a faith, or an apotheosis; we have three such seals: Those of Marka Māhēśa, Nakulīśa, Ayyappan-Dattātrēya. Pañchaśikha's seal could be included. Writing of a book by Vyāsa and one by Baskali, also seem to be recorded in a seal prepared on the occasion of some rite. The Atharvan seal and Pippalāda seal may be of the same kind. In each case, a new philosophy or order of religion is established.
9. Migrating traders, *etc.*, seem to have had their seals as mementos. (Three seals).
10. Foreign dignitaries, especially Persians, sometimes got their sacrifices performed here. One of it clearly states that it is being held expressly on behalf of the Persian king, presumably by a royal emissary.
11. Rākshasas also tried to publicise their religiosity by a number of rites and insisted on seals to hide their misdeeds. Baka, the Rākshasa, performed many. But scribes have used their punning ability to make fun of him.
12. Thanksgiving for an unknown person: the identity of the killer of Baka was not known. The citizens of Ekacakra performed a sacrifice for the well-being of 'a person unknown who finished Baka'.
13. Conquest, partition, *etc.*, are recorded. *E.g.*, sometimes, a king of one land conquers another and calls himself its 'Pati', which is the surest sign of conquest.
14. A random sampling of the priests' seals have convinced us that some important priest or some distinguished minor priest also had his seal, very probably as a distinction for having participated in a difficult rite performed by a king. Most names of priests mentioned here are reputed to have participated in some rite of a king and are also mentioned in purāṇas, brāhmaṇas, *etc.* Not all are Brahmins. Ailusha Kavasha was a Harijan. Tugra who calls himself a Ṛishi,

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was a Fisherman. Pijavana was a Yavana. The fate of Bashkali is still more interesting (see Seals 81 and 82). Tugpa does not seem to be a Brahmin either.

This proves our contention that at the back of these seals there was either some public cause or some magical purpose.

VII. SEAL-MAKERS

The seal-makers appear to be highly vedicised but of poor Kshatriya families. This guess is entirely based on the feeling this writer has that the present Paṭṭegār community of Karnatak, Maharashtra and elsewhere appears to descend from the original seal-makers. They have vedic names, wear a thread (a janivāra), mark on forehead, but are non-vegetarian. This is only a conjecture and could be dismissed out of hand at the touch of any other evidence to the contrary. We have evidence in these seals, of the seal-makers' habit of extensive use of pun, based on the lack of any syntactical rules. Pun is used for irony; sometimes it adds information. Without presuming that seal-makers were Kshattriyas and remotely connected by blood-links with kings, we will find it hard to explain the malicious irony which some employ. See for instance, our comments on the Vikukshi Śaśada seal (No. 88). On the death seal of king Vikukshi, the seal-maker has strained all his cerebral muscles to record the scandal of his boyhood. Such malice must have basic in a feeling that luck ignored them but made their kinsman king.

This fact should be borne in mind in explaining the curiosity with which seal-makers observed the events in the king's palace. Some could be Sūtas too. They were knowledgeable people and great masters in composing the legend. They used puns to hide their intent amidst outward appearance of stating a fact.

Dwāraka provides us with the clearest writing and the most finished seals. The language they used seems to be some kind of Prākṛit but closely connected with Saṅskṛit. The most finished seals, however, are not the best. Some Trasadasyu seals are cruder, but artistic. The Garuḍa seal coming from Dwāraka is very artistic. The seals of Baka show what a powerful social role the irony and

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punstership of the scribes could play. Quite often, the sacrificer himself wanted his name to be hidden, in which case this ingenuity was useful. Further, they saved space by smuggling in some significant phrase. For instance, Mahāmahī's seal contains two M letters which visually suggest that he was king of Hastināpur.

In another seal (No. 38), the short name 'Bhadrapa' of the sacrificer occupies the entire space, and only the mark of an insect suggests that he belongs to the Krivi country. This was "art" in a sense; but some others really are genuine works of art. The night-watchman Garuḍa seal stresses the loneliness of his life amidst shadows. So too, a Trasadasyu seal has made the lettering itself a pictorial arrangement depicting the night-march which brought him freedom from Divōdasa's captivity. That is first class art in any sense of the term though it is only lettering.

The technology of the seals, as briefly given by Wheeler, is quite satisfactory. Only, we wish to add a few details which might be useful. Wheeler tends to continue the tradition of Marshall in considering the seals as only an extension of pottery and ceramics. I think, this is a mistaken view. Royal background, good payment for artistry in a learned art, powerful vedicization, knowledge of political ups and downs in the palace, intimate inside information about the intents and ambitions of important citizens, officials, and others, urban life, contact with foreigners, and intimate contact with learned men and ṛishis, the art of composing legend for the seals, all these suggest a prosperous middle class life and social respect for seal-makers. Accordingly, their pride in their learned profession must have made them socially aware; there is at least one seal which has even chances of being a record of seal-makers' rite, though in our own preference, we have assigned it to metal-workers' guild. (See the Patrika seal No. 91).

The materials they used must have been riverine clay, no doubt. India has a long tradition of using jaggery as cement. It is time the seals are chemically analysed and if possible, the chemistry of the sucrose content used to date them. Clay and jaggery could have been mixed with cotton fibre to give it staying power. The slab, after it reached readiness, was first stamped over by the horse or any other

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required image. Then, the stock circular seal of alphabets (See what Wheeler describes as a bronze mirror, but which contains the marks of stick alphabets). For more artistic pieces, the lettering was hand-carved. Variety was introduced in the animal image by changes in decoration. Then, the artist brought solidity to the figure and lettering by removing excess clay and working along the edge of the marks left by the "stamp". This stamp was generally circular and thin (or else it would not have been mistaken for a mirror by Wheeler). The picture given by Wheeler shows stock letters along the edge and pictures and less frequent alphabets at the centre. This is an important detail. This accounts for the rare and latter day appearance of letters like Ja. Not that they were not known, but usually they came at the centre and usually they were connected with some other symbol. In an unfinished seal of Baka, the aim of the seal-maker was only to use the bent stem, which he wanted to erase with his knife. But, the impatient Rākshasa rejected the seal, and the artist left it unfinished. (See Marshall, 56). At least, one more seal remains unfinished. In that, we get a clue to the technical problems involved. It is a big seal and the horse is beautifully finished with even zebra stripes. But in paying all attention to the horse, the artist forgot that the seal had gone dry, and little time was left for stamping the lettering. Another seal is bent after finishing in the process of drying; probably cotton had not been used. (For instance, No. 23). This might have compelled the size reduction of seals. To produce the effect of Ja, quite often the seal-makers have resorted the universal Iya. We may even guess that the name of the sacrificer was orally mentioned, and composition of the legend was left to seal-maker's convenience. He economised his labour by using numbers, such as Pañcha which could also be Pan. Trasadasyu is twice written as 12 short lines divided into four rows, to be first read as Tri-Chatushka, and the similarity of sound to be used to guess the right reading. So is Dwaipāyan (Vyāsa) written first as numeral Two (two short lines) and then 5 short lines to add Pan, with an intervening cup-like universal vowel. There is much confusion in choosing Ś, Ṣ and S and quite often the scribe has used the double consonant just to avoid censure later. All this suggests oral instruction which he committed to

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memory and transcribed after preparing his slab; he often improvised the spelling. Quite often we find the use of the wheel like symbol which can be read in fifteen different ways, backward, forward, upside down. This symbol is one of the most confusing. Readers of this book might wonder why we have interpreted the same wheel symbol as Paksha, Kashapa, Pata, and once as Parasha. The seals were meant for those who knew the event and person; and the seal-makers never imagined that workers in the 20th century would be racking their brains and burning midnight oil over kings and famous men who were their contemporaries. The seal-maker used a vowel-less conjunct consonant and added one or two lines for Vraddhi without bothering to give us a clue as to which one of the consonants was supposed to have the A or Ā sound. For instance, the frequent "wheel" symbol (which is a conjunct consonant composing three sounds P, K, and Ś, or of two P, T, and vowel A or Ā followed by two short lines; it is left to the reader to read it as Paksha, Pakasha, Pakaasha, Pakashā, and then this process will have to be reversed;—it could be Shakasha, *etc.*, and then a third order must be tried out, Kashapa, *etc.* Even after all this, the Vṛddhi sign might act as an independent vowel A. Every such combination will have to be tried out and effort has to be made to fix the phrase as intended by the seal-maker. Hence the frequent ambivalent interpretation. Quite often, if the seal-maker has in mind 'the door-keeper of Dwāraka palace' he might merely use 'Dwārkara' and the place-name will have to be guessed by this punning reference. The worst instance of circumlocution just for *doubles entendres* is Vikukshi Śasada's death seal; it is so composed as to suggest to the reader that in his teenage, he had eaten a hare on a Paksha day and was reprimanded. But we have already mentioned good instances where the visual appearance of the letters is emotively used. Ruru's seal shows the two R's standing as husband and wife (84). We have mentioned the night march scene of Trasadasyu's escape from captivity. One has to see it to believe the entire visual artistry and light and shade effect of the lettering;—yet each mark is but a letter. We have also suggested that the two M letters in Mahāmahi's seal are deliberately made to look like two saluting elephants to suggest Hastināpur. One can imagine that the

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sacrificers too enjoyed these tricks played by the scribes. It must have been a real honourable profession to these artistic scribes. They were super-kings, making or marring the reputations of kings in the eyes of posterity. It is in this intellectual quality that Dwāraka seals are lacking, except in the remarkable seal of Garuḍa, the night watchman. But Dwāraka seals show great skill in bringing solidity to the lettering; one guesses, they must have possessed superior stamps. Garuḍa seals shows great skill and artistry in its enamelling. It is difficult to say what material they used for enamelling the lettering and the horse. I have a feeling that tamarind seed was first wetted, its skin removed, and the rind was ground into smooth paste, may be with some glue and colour. Further, it must require great skill and artistry to use the enamel to produce the required illumination in such fine artistic pieces as Trasadasyu-Vrasha (73) or Garuḍa seals. For sheer beauty and visual symbolism, I can only draw attention to that moving piece, mother-bird and fledgeling, standing, reverently before the father's tomb, each mark a letter, in Seal 36, belonging to child cripple Sagara.

How were the graffiti on the body of the horse produced? If it is by simple scratching of a knife or stylus, we have to stand amazed at the wonderful Picasso-like fused imagery of Nakuliśa seals Nos. 90, 93. The powerful sinuous livingness of the mongoose and limp figure of the dead child seem to vanish into the outlines of the horse. The graffiti often supplement our interpretation.

What sort of art is this? Is this art at all? Or mere skill? We do not wish to give a straight answer. Luckily for us, the mimetic tradition of Europe is practically dead now, and what can be described as 'symbolic' art is receiving recognition as an expression of the unconscious. Even so, we have to go to eccentric writers like W.B. Yeats to understand the thoroughly servile arts of Byzantium, of the Persian carpet, of calligraphy and many other forms of self-expression of a riligious age. We merely have to wait for books and authors of the right kind; and if we see symptoms around us, we have not come far to wait. They will explain the states of consciousness whose expression such art is. It is servile, only in the sense, it has some immediate purpose to serve, such as giving the name and patronym of

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the sacrificer, or making a coloured glass window for a cathedral. Our own conception of art is based on a narrow and limited personalistic civilization we live in. The least we can do is to await a more comprehensive understanding of other modes of life and art. We have already pointed out that the seal artists were certainly not servile men, merely because they worked for a specific purpose. Had it been so, our task of reading these seals would have been much simpler and mechanical.

VIII. THE SCRIPT AND THE LANGUAGE

This book endorses the alphabetical key provided by Dr. S.R. Rao in his latterday mimieographed LWIVP (with some additions, of course). But I cannot subscribe to his philosophy or his belief that the language is Saṅskṛit. That it is not Saṅskṛit but rather some Indo-Aryan dialect is amply proved by these readings. As these seals deal with the Vedic age, and as the Vedas themselves employ a language known to scholars as Vedic Saṅskṛit (Ārṣha), we can conjecture that the Vedas (or parts of them) were translated into the received dialect or a created artificial language we call Vedic; if so, that work was done by Vyāsa and his associates to avoid the confusion of dialects; but might have introduced a few distortions and made them nobler than what they were, originally. For instance, the Pippalāda seal employs a language more akin to Northern Kashmiri dialects and seems to employ term-ending more akin to modern Russian at least in its patronym. The name itself is 'Papalsha' and the funny name Pippalāda (eater of berries), could have been his own desperate attempt to be known by some centrally accepted name. Or, a later effect of Sanskritisation during Puranic age. We have supported the reading that it is Pippalada's seal mainly by his gotra, but it could have been some unknown person named Ailsa, (Seal 77), but less probably so. Most seals often employ such local dialects. We have seen how the scribes enjoyed some independence in composing the legend and often distorted these outlandish names and patronyms. (Good many names are Dravidian. Some alphabets undoubtedly issue from Dravidian source,—'Au' sign, for instance). The hurry with

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which they worked, completing all their work between the time the tablet was got ready and it dried made this work specialised, and the owners were content with the approximation of their names. But in case the name was totally wrong, even in consonants, the scribes obliged by making minor changes, but in funny ways. (See Seal of the first Śiva temple No. 96) in which the scribe wrote Kaika first; but made one minor change to convert first Ka into Wa, not with much success; but changed the other into Ma in a shockingly new way. Ma in all other 99 seals is an independent large letter occupying the entire width of the writing space; but, here, Ma is mounted on the second arm of A, a negligibly small letter, hand-carved and with marks of erasure. How did they do it? There is a gum called 'Ardāḷ' made of tamarind seed pulp which might have been used. But generally, minor errors of transcription were grudgingly accepted, because the seal-maker could guarantee no permanency to the later changes made in the 'Ardāḷ' base. Janert of Cologne treats the Indian script as if it started under Aśōka. He seems to ignore Harappan seals altogether. At best, we can guess that the evolution of the Brāhmi script made the phonetically imperfect Indus script outmoded. Pāṇini mentions a trade named 'Lipikaras' with some sarcastic contempt. We could guess that even after the alphabet and Sanskrit had reached perfect systemisation in the 2nd century B.C., the Lipikaras continued to distort by using their original script discarded long before. Only a century before, Alexander had seen them. But the seal-maker was the boss of his trade. For his purpose, the older script and its method of approximate spelling was suitable for the limits imposed by the technical haste involved. (The stone carver had no such problem). The script seals use is based on a spelling structure analogous to English, *i.e.*, the approximate sounds are represented, but the vowel sounds are re-interpreted in the light of the entire spelling. For I sound also, the seals use A letter; even to this day, I have heard Sindhis pronounce Dilip as Daleep.* But Harappan is not as irrational as English, *e.g.*, Rough, Dough, Fought, *etc.* The Harappan script is far more rational in phonetic approximation. The main ambiguities

*The inturned A is nearer I, as in Tamil.

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(leaving aside calligraphic trappings such as wheel-like PKS or PTA) arise from the universal cup-like 'A' whose values change slightly according to the context, as I, Y, E, U, *etc.* But the scribes give sufficient hints, *e.g.*, some rational modifications by the number of cross lines written on its arm-ends; but not always. Quite often, a calligraphic complex is followed by a repeated consonant to aid its right interpretation. The devices, we have guessed, arose from the difficulty of stamping. The seal writer had only one or two small circular stamps, whose centre was occupied by the animal stamp, and some other infrequent alphabets, or vowel marks like the 'Ai' and 'Au'; more convenient was the use of the marks made on the edge of the circular stamp which had all the frequently occurring consonants and vowels, especially the cup-like 'A'. Since its values could be freely employed for many purposes, the scribe used all his ingenuity in composing letterings with these convenient marks, and numerals. Numerals comprised as many short lines as the numbers they represent. 'King of Pāñchālas' could be suggested by 'number five'. On Trasadasyu's name we have commented. Calligraphic considerations made the use of I and U alphabets infrequent. Vowel I needs a crosswise short line rising upward and U bending downward, but they have to come in the middle of the written space. These needed utmost care, because the scribe used the same short line but had to hold the stamp crosswise, and the angle might produce an unaesthetic line. Besides, the aesthetic need—a pattern of long lines all across the writing space—was badly disturbed by these cross lines, introducing a break in the fluidity of the lettering. If we keep the beauty of the Trasadasyu seal of the night march in mind, this will be evident. In these hundred and one seals, we have not come across the original 'I' and 'U' more than about four or five times. This is the same principle as the one prescribed for engineers that they spell out all numerals upto 20 and use number signs above twenty in writing a technical report. Only the pleasantness of reading is involved in this, no more. But, in the Harappan script which frequently employs the visual impression meaningfully, this should have been an important consideration. Besides, unpleasant reading has a taboo effect on the Indian. We have remarked how in magical seals, the lettering was

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made deliberately ugly and unpleasant. Even today, letters conveying the message of death of some relative is written in a bad hand, ink blotches are deliberately made and the postcard is deliberately crumpled before posting. 'Lakshaṇa' or pleasant appearance, 'Bhadramukha' a person whose face brings pleasant thoughts to the onlooker, have a preferential value. 'Avalakshaṇa' is dreaded. In choosing brides, a 'lakshaṇa', bright cheerful girl, is preferred over petulant beauties who are said to bring ruin to the house. Even the great rationalist, Mahatma Gandhi, used to be ashamed of his indifferent handwriting. Aesthetic considerations are part of religion in India. We have to bear this in mind especially because the seals mark religious rites.

Further, there was also a belief that direct writing of the name robbed a great man of some of his charisma. Trasadasyu's many seals use numeral signs. So does Vyāsa's. Nakūlīśa's name comes as a pictorial mark of the mongoose. Often, some intellectuals preferred this indirect representation of their names out of modesty, or the religious prescription of that gifts should be anonymous.

All these considerations have to be taken into account if we wish to read this script. Above all, we have to consider the penchant for *doubles entendres* of the seal makers. I do not think, we should ever be able to reduce Harappan script to its bare key. It is a total system. Suggestion, pictorial effect, phonetic approximation, pun based on the unpunctuated proximity of words, will enter into our study as part of the system itself. It is the seal-makers way and we have to accept it. The alphabetical key given later should be taken as the minimum basis rather than an exhaustive.

Dr. Rao's key is based on the abstraction of similar-looking Chaldean, Phoenician, Akhiram and Hebrew scripts. There is another source he does not seem to have tapped. Before the evolution of the Brāhmi, and later Nāgari scripts, India used a script named Akshapada (Avakahaḍa). Its reliquiaes are still found in books on astrology. It had 27 letters whose names are available; My efforts to obtain the original signs (in which Sri Vishwanātha Śāstri of Kōḷiwāda assisted me) have not been successful. But I have a feeling that the signs were known about a hundred years ago. In my boyhood, I have seen a strange script

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in a book on *Bhāgawata*, not a manuscript, but one printed in litho technique. I suggest that researchers could go to astrologers for a more complete key, especially those who have ancient MSS. The twenty odd ancient books I examined in the library give the names of the alphabets but not the signs. They are all post-1920 publications. My belief gets support from an unexpected quarter. Prof. D.R. Bendre, the Jñānapīṭh Award-winning poet, tells me that in late 1920s, a Marathi scholar published an article in *Vividha Vritta* saying that the seals mentioned the gōtra-making ṛshis. That could have been based on some knowledge of the Akshapada, which is akin to the Phoenician alphabet. This suggests that the original Akshapada script was available fifty years ago, and is hidden away among ancient manuscripts. I record this on the unfounded hope that traditional astrologers take a holiday from their ambition of reading the horoscopes of 10,000 famous men and ransack the manuscripts in their home for the original Akshapada signs.

Where I radically differ with Dr. Rao must also be stated. He continues in the belief of the Western scholars that a separate civilization named Indus or Harappan existed and tries to reconstruct it. How else to explain his pronouncement that a nice Harappan king named Paka or Baka, when six seals read here clearly state that he was an Abyssinian meat merchant; that in due time, he terrorised the villages; that he lived in a hill named Vamrādri or Kaiṭābhādri; that people called him a rākshasa; that he extorted from them illegal levies; called himself Āyapati, *i.e.*, tax-gatherer; that the scribes punningly described him as a cannibal; and a mischievous scribe (exaggeratedly) describes his eating three men at one time? Who else could he be but the Bakasura? One seal even records the fact that an unknown good man delivered the people of his tyranny by killing him. They perform a rite to wish him well whoever he be. Mahābhārata records that Pāṇḍavas left the village by night in a hurry lest public laudation give them away. In the face of so many correspondences and agreements between the seal and Mahābhārata account, are we far wrong in our belief that this Baka is Mahābhārata Baka, killed by Bhima? We are not interested in proving the truth of purāṇas. But, we rely on Pargitter in the belief that

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Purāṇas recorded history; but that this history is of the golden age of 1900 years. After that came the dark age of 1,000 years which introduced many mythical elements; but the basic structure, geneology and synchronism remains the same, especially because the golden age was regarded with awe and reverence. I do not think that to this day Pargitter's theory has been disputed. It was just neglected, now it is being revived by the efforts of Dr. Corder. Our reading of the seals confirms Pargitter, and to a limited extent, the hasty and extravagant Waddell. I do not think that it is feasible to reconstruct an entire civilization from the seals. When alternative literary data and theories which have not been disproved over the lapse of 50 years, is it wise not to pay attention to these? That would be excess of the reverse kind.

I acknowledge indebtedness to Dr. H.M. Nayak for unstinted help, and to Dr. Gururaja Rao, who helped me to take the Rao method seriously. (The only lecture Dr. S.R. Rao I heard had impressed me the wrong way, mainly, I presume, because of the funny examples of decipherment he illustrated, which contrasted with his claim that the language was Sanskrit). I also thank Dr. Ritti for lending me a copy of LWIVP. I also thank my son Ravi for assisting me with the drawings.

IX. READING SEALS AND MODES OF ATTESTATION

The seals are read from right to left. To avoid duplication and simplify the task of the reader, their readings are given from left to right. Each syllable is numbered and transcription is given accordingly. Only the Vṛddhi signs are not numbered. But when the sign is phonetically separate, it is also numbered. Then the full punctuated reading is given. Then its translation. Finally some comment is given on (a) why it was read so; (b) the comparative validity of alternate readings; (c) historic background based on Vedas, Purāṇas *etc.*

Ambiguities and alternative readings arise because of (a) lack of punctuation; (b) stock symbols like the 'wheel', open to many phonetic interpretations; (c) "Trick" spellings and mischievous

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circumlocution of the scribes; (d) Use of ambiguous or approximate vowels to suit the convenience of scribes; (e) the use of numeral spellings. The short vertical line could be alphabetically 'A', but numerically it is 'Ay' (*ka*). Dwi could be read is as Dwa, or Wa. Tri could be Shri, Tra, Tras or Tras, even Tar. 'Chatus' could be Tus, Tur, Chatus, or Chitra. Pañcha, 'Pan', Pāñchāla, *etc.* Ṣat could be Sat ('good'). Sapta we have not yet come across. Aṣṭa is used to mean king Aṣṭaka *etc*; (f) Syntactical *doubles entendres*; (g) Stock conjunct consonants and ambiguity in the "vṛddhi" which follows.

In such ambiguous cases, alternative readings are given and the reason why one is preferred over others. Overtly absurd readings are not mentioned.

Modes of Attestation : (a) Observation of the graffiti. In general, it is observed that whenever the legend appears ambiguous, the scribe adds graffit to assist indetification. (b) Repeated end consonants are the aid given by the scribe to lead the reader out of ambiguity of stock conjuncts. (c) Some visual aids assist identification, *e.g.*, Ruru, or Mahāmāyī. (d) The way the thread is worn by the horse. Yādava seals show only one string across; brahmanical are both across; Kshatriya both outside. Āṅgirasa, one across, *etc.* (e) There generally is a fire signal, a flame, smoke, or fuzziness at top, in the case of an Āṅgirasa sacrificer. Zebra stripes often show a king of Hebraic origins. (f) Titles like Paksha, Patshah, *etc.*, indicate Persian origin of the sacrificer, *e.g.*, Bhagīratha is Phagsha. (g) The last and most important is the agreement of the name and patronym. That completes the identification.

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PART II

Readings with Commentary

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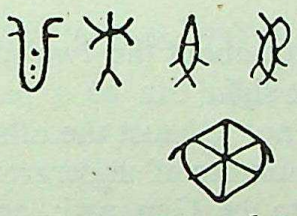
(Numbers according to Sir John Marshall's *Mohenjo-Daro and the Indus Civilization*)

Warning : There could be slight errors in transcription, especially when the seal is unfinished. Lumps of unremoved clay and edges appear like lines in photo blocks. Graffiti on horse's body often give important clues. But they are often illegible. The commentary describes them where needed. Wherever there is doubt, the reader is advised to compare the transcription with the original.

I



1. ...(*broken*) ... *Psai Śri Kra Yyaka Aipati*

Translation : (name) . . Meat Seller and Tax Levier

Commentary : Among these hundred one seals, five already identified as Baka's; this and cf. 20; 45; 52; 56. All suggest his being a cannibal; but this, though the name is missing, suggests that he was a meat seller who later found it convenient to be a cannibal and levier of compulsory tax. MBh suggests that he was not a king; the king of Ēkachakra was weak and this bully seems to have been an unchecked extortionist. From the frequency of his horse sacrifices one guesses that he combined religion and profit and the animals could have been from the levy. He seems to have gone a little off his head, because, elsewhere he boasts of having eaten three men alive the same day. The rite of human sacrifice, however, cannot be ruled

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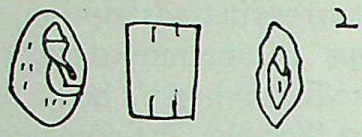
out in small pockets, though, as Keith points out, in the days of Śatapatha and Taittiriya Brāhmaṇas (later Vedic age), the rite was merely symbolic. (Keith, *RPVU*, 347).



2. (1) (*hand-carved pictograph*) *Nāga*;
   (2) *Bha/Bahha*;
   (3) (*pict.*) *Gaṇapati*.
   (4) *Naga Baha Gaṇapati* (*Nakulīśa*)

Reading : (a) Nabhaga; (b) Naga Bahha: (c) Nabhanedista.

Commentary : As there can be no certainty about the two pictorials on either side, except that the hood on right can be a pictograph for *Nāga*, even these three readings do not exhaust the other possibilities. The last pictorial shows a number of underground and underwater creatures, but one appears to be Gaṇapati; and hence Ga in (a). But it could be Nedista (nether creatures) too. Though Veda mentions Gaṇapati (gaṇānām twā gaṇapatim), it is not certain if elephant head was associated with him. The sign 'Ṅ' seems to be a later development and hence the pictographs. My own very serious objection to reading Nābhāga or Nabhanedista is that both are early kings. The age does not seem to tally with the sophistication of the 'Bh' lettering or the quality illumination (*i.e.*, enamel). Nabhanedista is described as the son of Manu himself, *i.e.*, the very second chronological slab in Pargitter's geneology. (Par : *AIHT*). We can only say that Manu is a symbolic starting point of the post-deluvian history. (The deluge, in my opinion, was not only meteorological but geological. Manu is described as Drāviḍa and inhabitant of Malaya [southern] hills).

'Nakuliśa' seems to be nearest accurate identification. The two other seals of Nakuliśa (Nos. 90 and 93) have Nāga symbols. One

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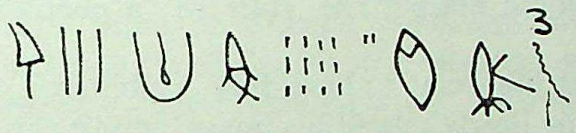
even calls him by nearly the same title, 'Nagabashaka'. The graffita seems to read 'Nakkasha', a name used in Seal 93. Considering the fact that Nakulīśa is Śiva's avatāra, the 'Gaṇapati' symbol is not unexpected. The only doubt is that as in the other two, no 'mongoose' symbol is used here. Also, unlike the other two, the horse's thread is outside. The other two seals describe him as Scythic. Later he was Vedicised. Therefore, it is reasonable to describe this as an early Nakaulīśa seal, before his acceptance in the high Vedic tradition of Śatarudrīya (Yajus).



3. (*Sa*) *Mha Para Trichatus*

Trasadas

S'iya Pa Tra Dha

Pu

Reading : (Sa)mhapara Trasadasyu Putradhah

Commentary : Two meanings can be read :

(1) Samhapara, the son of Trasadhasyu (Trasadasyu), was the king of Ayōdhya (Par. 23rd). His son was Sambhūta, probably a misreading of Sa(i)mhapara.

(2) Simha, the begetter of son (king) Trasadasyu, the Para (*i.e.*, Purukutsa's son).

The second meaning is so malicious and contains so tragic a story that it is worthy of being a novel or drama by itself. Here we can only mention some broad details and request the readers to compare six other Trasadasyu seals in this first lot of a hundred and one seals.

Purukutsa, the king of Ayōdhya (Par. 22) married Purukutsani, his sister. In the long war of attrition between the Kās'is and

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Ayōdhyas, Purukutsa was taken prisoner and killed after long captivity. The incestuous marriage had proved infructuous. Purukutsani courageously performed a *niyōga* rite in honour of Mitra and Varuṇa and begot the great Trasadasyu, after cohabiting (with this Simha, probably). From the five Trasadasyu seals here, we see a human drama unfold as tragic as Oedipus' or Hamlet's; but more irredeemable. Besides being threatened by the traditional enemies of his throne, Trasadasyu seems to have been estranged from his priest Vṛisha too. (See Seal 73).

This seal is sheer malice. It contains two puns : 'Pāra' and 'Patra'. Pāra is 'son of Purukutsa', or of (Simha) the brahmin. Patra as it is written down, can also be read as Putra (a contemptuous term) whereas Patra should mean "*The ruler* of a people" (Padtra).

Trasadasyu's entire life seems to have been embittered by this malice (of Vṛisha); but he slowly rebuilt his image amidst this wreck of his life; he composed three ṛchas for Ṛigvēda. Vāmdēva's Ṛigvēdic hymn uses him as the paragon of generosity. The Dāśarājñi war ended with Purukutsa's fall. Trasadasyu initiated a reign of peace; and yet he was held captive for a time merely for being considered Purukutsa's son. In another seal, he humbly requests his denigrators not to consider him as son of Purukutsa : "I merely bear his name", though elsewhere he expresses pride for his father and mother. Two of his three verses in Ṛgvēda deal with this problem of parentage, where, he vainly tries to persuade his enemies that he was the gift of Mitra and Varuṇa and therefore, he was Ardhadēva (half-divine). The third records his escape from enemy fort by the heroic self-sacrifice of his friend Śambara.

I favour the second interpretation because it fits into other themes recorded in other seals here, in Ṛgvēda and in the Purāṇas; secondly, this malicious seal symbolically represents the thread of the horse with a special *niyōga* knot, rare among these seals. The malicious intent of Vṛsha, his priest, is evidenced in his Ṛgvēdic verse (See Seal 73).

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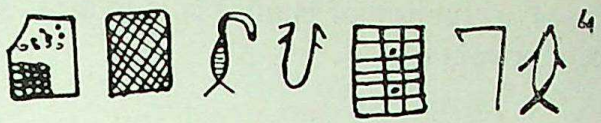
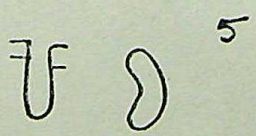


4. *Sha Gā Ksha Ayi Sha Ksha Vakswi*

Readings: Shagaksha (Sagashaka) Ayishakshawakshwi Shagashaka, the son of Ikshwaku.

Commentary : Such crossed boxes have been identified as 'ksha' symbols. But all pictorials can also be reversed in sound; even without the reversal, we can easily read the patronym, and we know that Ikshwāku, the founder of the dynasty and 'son of Manu'. (Gita describes him more as Manu's pupil, and moreover, he is never once connected with Ila or Iḷā, Manu's bisexual wife) Ikshwāku was, at least, Manu's junior contemporary. Not only is the seal beautiful, but primitive. The shaded "W" and cap-like "Ai" in the last letter, seem to be the original forms of these early alphabets.

Obviously, the name meant "hare-eyed"; and the Purāṇas use his nickname "Śaśāda", the eater of hare on Ekādaśi; though it is needless to discredit an estrangement between father and son. Refer to 88, the other seal of the same Śaśāda. This seal proves that he did have a contemporary nickname and Purāṇas have merely ignored his original name 'Shagaksha'.



5. *PI*

Belongs to Pijavana, (Pi-Yavana) the father of the war-like Sudasa, the king of Kāśi; Sudasa started the ten-king war (Dāśarājñi) which ended after many generations of feudal hatred. Pijavana's other name was Pañchajana; he was closely associated with

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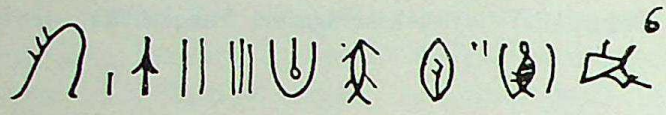
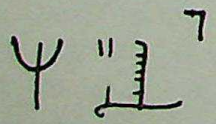
Pāñchāla tribes and was a subject of many Vēdic hymns. A small seal, broken into two, horizontally.



6. *Manu Pa Vrshapa Ahapa Shai Yapa Waiashapah*

Reading : Manupa Vṛshapa Ahapa Shaiyapa Waiyyashapah

Commentary : If the reading is correct, this records a treaty among four important kings which marks the start of Indian history, and probably the source of the Indian legend that Manu was the father of all these kings. Like King Lear, he is reputed to have divided his kingdom among these kings by appointing them governors. The kings are, Manu, Vṛsha (*i.e.* Vikukshi Śaśada of Ayōdhya), Āyu of Kāśi, and Nabhanēdiṣṭa of Vaiśāli. Even if the identifications of these kings is not correct,there is a record of a long sacrifice lasting over 12 years in Naimisha forest. Manu could be a senior contemporary, a non-ruling king. This can only be a conjecture. But the seal suggests the holding of a joint sacrifice. Purāṇās say that Pururavas was the only king who did not directly participate, though he paid his contribution; but later, robbed gold from the sacrificial platform (Vēdi).



7. *Wahna Ka* (*Vahnika*)

Commentary : Vahni was the son of Turvasu, and grandson of Yayāti,

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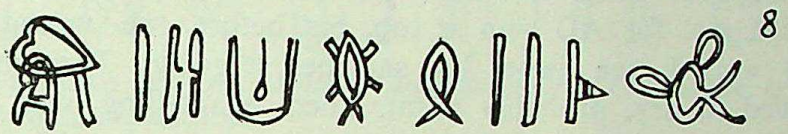
according to *Vishṇu* and *Vāyu* Purāṇas. The fact that some Ṛgs mention a sea-wreck of a Turveeti from which he was saved, probably accounts for the boat-like formation of lettering in Vahni's seal. The thread on horse is round, which suggests that Vahni's generation considered themselves fully Kshatriyas, in spite of their descent from Dēvayāni.



8. *Vr(s)d Rayi Sha Sai Ipa Dwaya Dasa*

Reading : Vṛdraisha Shaipa Divodasa

Commentary : Divōdasa of Kāśi is a distinguished king who, in the course of the long ten-king war, humbled Purukutsa and later captured Trasadasyu. Though Purāṇas are ambiguous, Ṛgvēda (6, 61.1) considers him as son of Vṛdraśwa. In most patronyms, the vṛddhi affects the last syllable. Shaipa or Shai is Persian for king (Shāha). The use of numbers for names leads to wild distortions. Dwi often is Divi.

9. *Nil.*

The scrawl has been erased, probably with what, in Kannada, is known as 'ardāḷa', wax or tamarind seed paste mixed with mud, *etc.*

Commentary The Seal, however, is important for other reasons. It gives us a clue to the process adopted. After the earthen tablet,

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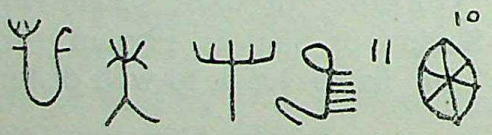
probably mixed with jaggery and cotton, had reached the right condition, the worker stamped the needed alphabet close to each other with his bronze stamp carrying along its edges, the alphabets. Such letters formed the base around which he worked thickness with his knife and removed the excesses. The general letters were along the edge, the pictographs at the centre. (See the circular pan with alphabets at the edge and pictographs in the middle in figure 25 B in Sir Alexander Wheeler's *The Indus Civilization* 3rd ed., C.U.P., 1968. Also see Baka's Seal No. 56 in Marshall. The PD sign is used just for AU sign at top, but before the wrong sign could be erased, the owner has snatched it away). Then the seal was allowed to dry, probably burnt. Then enamelling was done. Then it was sent to the Mohenjodaro or some other library for the use of Sūtas or Vyāsas. Though this seal does not carry writing, the graffiti are seen along the edges. Obviously the *ardāḷa* has gathered in lumpts along the edges. In our opinion, chemical analysis of sucrose content of the seals might date them.



10. *Kaashaap Aa Pahvaga Hae Krih Hayah*

Reading : Kāshapāvhaga Hayakriyah

Commentary : A horse seller surnamed (or of the family of) Kashapas. Kashapas were Caucasians and seem to have founded both Kāśi and Kāśmira (see the seal of Paippalāda, No. 77 showing that Angirasas also came from the same stock). Horses seem to be very much in demand in India, considering the wars and horse sacrifices, though later they were so expensive that not always was a horse actually killed, as Keith points out.

The 'wheel' can be read as Parasha or Kashapa or in many other ways. Any other name will do. The string is firmly outside, and hence Parasha has to be dropped.

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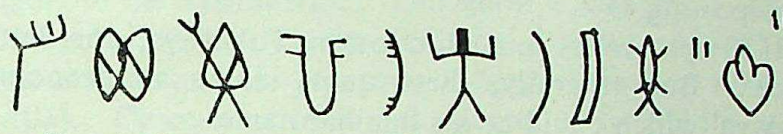
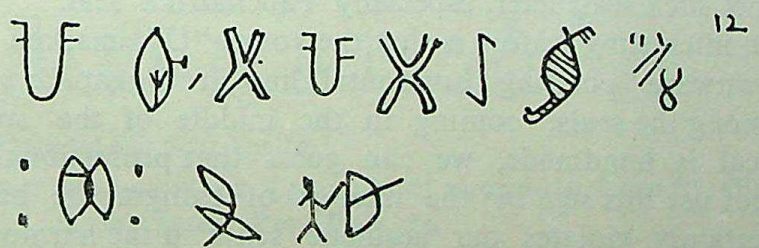
Grammar and script here need comment. Wherever the script was ambiguous, the last letter was duplicated as an aid to correct reading, especially when the person was less known. Here, 'Pa', 'ha' are repeated as such aids. The seal belongs to Yādava Vṛishṇi period.



11. *Praa (Paraa) Shae Ppa Arhakayi Dwarapaapa Ha Parashaippa (Prashayippa) Arhakaya Dwarapapaha*

Reading : Arhaka, son of Praapa (or Prapa), the chief of door-keepers. (Dwāra can be taken to mean Dwārawati or Dwārakā also).

Commentary : From the neat lettering and excellent alignment, it can be guessed that it belongs to the Yādava Vṛishṇi age. Like many other Yādava seals, the zebra wears the thread across; but no Yādava symbols on body. The graffiti seem to show two guards with bows and arrows.



12. *Waamaa Vrsh Naa Ta Ya Ta (u) Kapa (paka) Ya Dwa Ra Paapa "PAPA" Appaya*
(Papa bracketed, and two lines scrawled ending in 'A' signs).

Reading : Wāma Vṛishṇataya Tukapaya/Dwārapaapa "Appaya"

Commentary : This is a real common man's seal,—a simple door-keeper's, probably, home-made; totally unprofessional. Probably, records a death rite, judging from the four vertical bars, suggesting

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burial. c.f., the rectangular burial pits. We can read them as quotes, but are pronounced as A—A.

(2) The horse is well-finished. The graffiti suggest fish marks. Even today Tugra and Tuka are popular names with fisher-folk.

(3) Not improbably, the lettering was hand-scrawled (not stamped) to mark death. To this date, letters conveying messages of death are badly scrawled, their edges crumpled, and ink dots are made before posting.

(4) If "Papa" refers to a child lost by Tukapaya, the latter is the Sacrificer. But generally, these quota marks are pronounced. Hence 'Appaya' which could be his familiar name.

(5) The first syllable, arranged vertically, can be read as "Agama", not Vama. But both readings would still make it an interesting seal; it suggests the existence of either Tantrism or Agamism (in the special sense of a Shaivite 'left' cult) among common people.

(6) Even if "Vṛishṇata" can be read as man belonging to the Vṛishṇi tribe, it merely shows that he belonged to an age slightly before the death of Kṛishṇa, after which Vṛishṇis joined the newly founded Bhāgawata Kṛishṇa cults and founded the Pāñcharātra ritual based on Tāntrik practices. We have already commented on the establishment of Nakulisa faith a little earlier than Kṛishṇa's death. There are more such seals later, especially 'Pañchatrika' seal.

(7) An interesting feature is that the vowel "U", marked with a short downward pointing horizontal line in "Tukapa"; this is infrequent among the seals, coming in the middle of the spread. Since this seal is handmade, we can guess that professional seal makers did not use this sign in the interest of calligraphic beauty. This sign certainly violates our aesthetic sense in the harmony of long lines. Hence, the scribes had to use all kinds of Vṛddhis with the universal cup-like "A"; this was an accepted practice and accurate spelling was not insisted upon, in view of the technical problems of the seal-makers' work. But the alphabet existed and has made its appearance in a hand-made seal.

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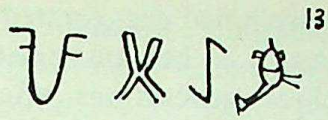
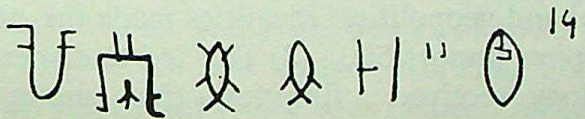


13. *Vrsh Na Ka Ya* (*Vṛshnakaya*)
Reading: This is a small seal, but shows a horse sign.

The lettering is neat. Further, this cannot just mean "A man belonging to the Vṛshṇi tribe". Our guess is that this is the seal of the great king Vṛshṇi, the founder of Vṛshṇi dynasty, which later begot Kṛshṇa and Bala. He was the youngest of the four sons of Sātvata. (Par. 105). Descending from his second wife Mādri, came Devamidhus, whose son was Vāsudeva. Judging from Vāsudeva's career,- as minister of Kamsa, we can guess that Yādavas observed primogeniture. (Yādavas were partly Caucasian, partly Hittite, partly Abyssinian-Śaibya, partly Kshatriya. They were very progressive and broad-minded). Having little chance to succeed to the throne, Vṛshṇi founded a small princedom in Saurashtra; but international trade made him prosperous. The Yādava, Sātvata Vṛishṇi seals are the neatest and the most finished. Thus we can place this seal earliest in his career. This can only be a guess.



14. *Paasan Ga Sha Shae Sra Ya*

Reading: Saesraya (S and N are narrowly accommodated into P) Other reading of the first letters: Pasu, Pis'u, *etc.*
Translation: Sahesraya, (Sahasraya), son of Piśaṅga
Commentary: Pi'saṅga was a ṛishi who presided over the snake sacrifice; he is mentioned in *Pañchavimsa Br.* Not much is known about his son's distinction, except that he was a teacher.

If Janamejaya's was the sole snake sacrifice, and Pi'saṅga rightly identified, this becomes another important evidence in favour of our hypothesis that the Harappan Age is but the Vedic age, not a

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pre-Vedic one. Purāṇas mainly record a mythified exaggerated oral tradition centred on the same Vedic Age; *i.e.*, beginning with the "sons" of Manu and ending two or three generations after the Mahābhārata War; and this was followed by a thousand years of a "dark" age during which this Vedic memory in the skeletal form of Vanshavalies and the main doings of the Vedic heroes and ṛishis was preserved in the verses of bards, Sūtas, Magadhas and Vandins; distortions were introduced to fit the parentage of royal patrons; gaps were filled in by exaggerated and fantastic legends; Vedic hymns were preserved for magical purposes in villages, and among tribes; then came the Vyāsas who went round to collect these.

We passingly explain the term, "a dark age". No age can really be dark. Mahābhārata war could have produced at least two historical effects. (1) It ended contact with the Asian mainland. (2) It ended the passive age which makes for large empires without resistance. The little tribes over a large part of the mainland which participated in the war went back with a new awareness of their power. Hundreds of petty princedoms, especially among the north eastern regions which yielded easy passage to outsiders, now developed geopolitical sense of identity; entrenched themselves into defensive positions; warred for cultivable land and cattle; and also, through plunder and other resistance, sealed off India from the rest of Asia. This new tribal and geopolitical identities made the growth of large and wealthy empires impossible. (3) This led to dispersal of capital; though technology received a fillip for a time among tribes living on richer soils, among the rest, it got a serious setback; this led to stagnation; herein we get the source of vast inequalities which led to the stiffening of caste system. Communication, commensality and intermarriage began to get rarer and rarer; travel became more difficult; thus was born the "self-sufficient Indian village", very peaceful but very stagnant for the lack of communication with the rest of the world. Self-awareness at a time when technology is too underdeveloped to render co-operation necessary always leads to this stage of fragmentation. Fragmentation into thousands of petty princedoms or destitute princely rule necessarily leads to neglect of contemporary history. It is too petty to deserve historiographic

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effort. Sūtas are employed, but made to do some additional physical work, such as tending horses. The entire professional tradition of geneology and history gets devalued, because the paymasters are too poor to let people live on Vanshavalies and story-telling alone.

(4) As a substitute hierarchy, the *Guru-Śishya* tradition grows up. When Buddha came up, he found this a ready institution and could build Vihāras based on this substitute institution. In India, almost every village has a few muṭṭs; it could not have been merely a religious awareness which made this possible. The petty little princes must have so ruined their stagnant economy that the holy men in their sincerity could produce a little more on their farms and got wealthier. Their reputation for goodness which made them reliable arbitrators and often intervened in settling these petty political feuds. Institutions born in social necessity later became independent shapers of social habits. Every Purāṇa records that Sūtas took shelter in Āshrams oftener than in courts and taught the holy men their traditional purāṇas; they could no longer be patronised by princes. Here they got a warmer hospitality and a more eager listener. That explains the decay of historiography. The *gurus* were not interested in contemporary history. They would rather listen to what had now become a holy memory,—of past kings, prophets, lovers, all of them now surrounded by a theistic halo. The doings of the kings were really the doings of gods. That Trasadasyu was a tragic king was of less interest for the holy men than that when he was imprisoned, two gods helped him to escape. For years, the ignorant guru might have repeated the Vedic hymn of Usija, mistaking him for Bhishaja (medicine) as charm against his belly-ache. Sūta might not tell him that he is no doctor but an undistinguished king. Thus, after long periods of isolation, Indians might become so ignorant of their cousins across the Himalayas that Ikshwāku (which is really 'Isak', a Middle East name) might make the Guru curious. "Pray, all-knowing (Mahāmate) Sūta, tell me why this great son of Manu got this funny name". Sūta, who himself did not know the origins of Ikshwāku, must improvise an answer: "Manu once caught cold and sneezed. Ikshwāku (the sneezing sound) was then born from his nose". (Five purāṇas repeat this

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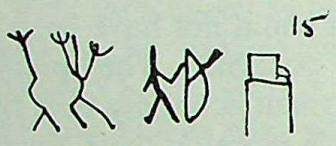
story which is clearly an improvisation, because the Sūta's own son might be getting training while this tale is being told).

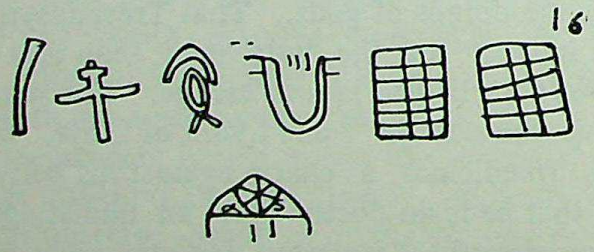
With all these foreshortenings and distortions, the central historical facts were preserved; we have to identify them judiciously.



15. *Saha Dwāra Ra Kshaha (Saha Dwārarakshah),*

Saha, the Doorkeeper/The Joint Doorkeeper

Commentary : Doorkeepers made money by receiving gifts from visitors. Lettering is crudely improvised and not properly finished. Most letters have notches at top which might be misread as aspirated. R and D are joined for effect-to look like a man with a bow, but it leads to problems. R should have been nearer the last letter. The last letter combines K, S and H.



16. *Kaus'a Kashayitra Shau Tsha Pa...seal...Parashurama*

Readings : Kauś 'akaś' ayitra Sautsapa/Paras'urama Paras'urama, the Grandson of Kaushiki

Commentary : Kaushiki was the grandmother of Paraśurāma and mother of Jamadagni. The axe-like ring seal is beautiful. The "au" sign on the first ksha is a new feature. Soutsapa seems to mean

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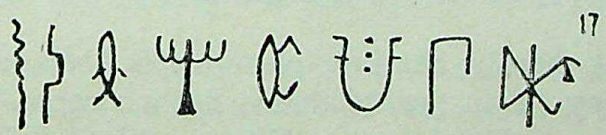
'grandson'. Obviously, since she was alive, Paraśurāma preferred to mention her. Or, as pointed out by Pargitter, as some situations made mention of both father and mother unpleasant, the son referred to another person, or relative. Sautsa seems to be derived from Sūta; the vedic index does not mention this form. Graffiti shows a double-faced short axe with a short handle. Kārtavirya-Arjuna is said to have killed Jamadagni for refusing to part with his good ('divine') cow; Paraśurāma killed him, and continued to destroy Kshatriyas ("12,000 annointed monarchs") *i.e.*, twelve kings, for which his manes (pitars) cursed him. He was halted by Rāma. I personally suspect, after having seen the short axe, that much of his destruction comprised breaking seals of kings preserved in libraries, so as to wipe out the "name" of Kshatriyas from earth. Probably, his activity did not extend to Mohenjodaro; too far. There is not much evidence for this guess; and we certainly know, that Divodasa's father Tālajaṅgha was injured and left in a forest; and Divodasa himself, in his flight discovered and nursed him.



17. *Ma R Kaya Ma Hai sha.....(1 letter broken)*

Readings : Marka Mahaisha (Marka, the Promulgator of Māhesha Cult) Practitioner

Commentary : Mārkaṇḍeya's father is Markandu; it may be a back-formation. Mārkaṇḍeya is said to have declared the Mārkandeya Purāṇa, a great work which collects the myth and legend of heterodoxies. The Māheśa cult became popular after the decline of Buddhism. But it must have been established in the later Harappan age. The chief interest here is that the famous "Śiva" seal is really Marka's and displays a Māheśa yogi, friend of all, especially animals.

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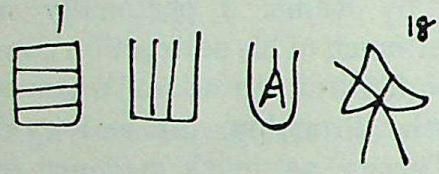
Māheśa is local and seems to have been influenced by and absorbed the Nakuliśa Pāśupata cult. The most interesting feature is the graffito: a square stone with the pindi (liṅga with channel) at the top, known to have been worshipped in India, but very rare. It is known as Chatushka Liṅga (Chokkalinga). It is said that such liṅgas were popular in pre-Islamic Middle East. This seems to have been favoured by Māheśa and must have been introduced by Nakuliśa.



18. *Dwipas'a Ha Tur Bha*

Dwipas'aha Turbha (Turbha or Turvasu, King of an Island)

Commentary : There can be no doubt about the subject of this seal. Yāyāti's son Turvasu is (along with other three elder sons) 'cursed' by him to become king of Mlecchas in a distant island, for not agreeing to 'take on' his old age (protesting against his father's merry ways and long rule).

The language is hardly Sanskrit. Not only is Shah foreign, but has no terminations; 'h' in the syllable is not a visarga, but is consonantal, mounted on 'a' and sealed off in cup-like 'a'. Understandably, patronym is missing. 'chatur' sign often becomes 'tur', cha being only a duplicative prefix. A map is affixed to the animal's chest. The thread is firmly outside, though Turvasu was half-brahmanical which (as with Yādavas) justified one string to be across the animal's leg. Graffiti are interesting, but in some neat foreign script, probably Chaldean, and deserves investigation. There is a boat with flag flying, which could also be a letter. The symbol is a zebra, but that is not unusual. The name on the chest appears to be "paita", yellow, and hence Turvasu could have settled down in China; but 'Peeta' island may be another.

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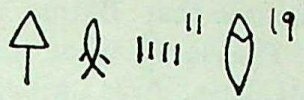
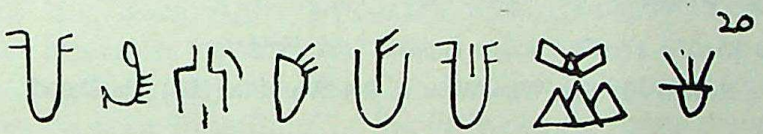


19. *Papa Para Tur Sha Da (Para Turshada)/Papa*

Trasadasyu, the son of Purukutsa/King Trasadasyu

Commentary : A small humble but neat seal of Trasadasyu, the king of Ayodhya (cf. See 3). There is a spelling mistake. The R curve inside the first P is rounded, but should have been a little left or right as some other seals have done. Now it reads, Papa, *i.e.*, King. Even this is understandable, as he does not wish to remember his father.



20. *Paka Vamradri Rak S'a Hani Syai Gahapa Iya*

(Paka Vamrādri Raks'a Hanis'ya Gahapiya) (This rite is done in honour of) That Unknown Person who Killed Baka, the Demon (or Guard) of Vamrādri and Vanished. (Gahapa seems to be some version of Gudha Purusha)

Commentary : This is further a solid evidence in favour of our theory that puranas tell the history of Vedic times in a mythified way. They romanticize love and hate, but do not tell lies. This is solid contemporary evidence that a cannibal named Baka lived; that he began as a meat merchant (See seal 1); he soon became an extortionist and finally a cannibal; that to silence people, he performed sacrifices; that he hid in a hill (here specified as Vamrādri; which also can be read as Kitādri/Kaitabhādri/Patañgādri, because of the pictograph); that Pāṇḍavas came incognito to Ekachakra village; lived with a brahmin family; that the brahmin was too poor to give Baka a horse or a goat and was asked to part with a son; that a Pāṇḍava, Bhīma himself, went to Baka and killed him. Afraid of disclosing their whereabouts, Pāṇḍavas vanished in the middle of the night. Some details

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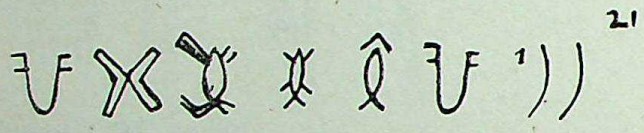
may be discredited; we could even distrust the tale that Bhīma killed him, or that Pāṇḍavas ever came there. The least what the seal confirms is that Baka of Vamrādri, a Rākshasa, was killed by "person or persons unknown" and that the people of the place performed a rite to wish well for the unknown benefactor/s. This is communicative enough and affirmative enough. This moment, we can but think of stormtroopers like Waddell and Pargitter with gratitude for writing in the twenties what is being confirmed exactly half a century later. The seal is damaged but can be read.



21. *Papa Aya Shaishe Vrs Ga Ta Aya Papaya Saise Vṛsgataya*

(May This Rite Reach) My Son Who Went to Rsi World in (His) Childhood.

Commentary : A human document, this records a child's death. This could also mean, or, for the well-being of my father who took the holy orders when I was young. (Papu, acc. to Apte, is foster-mother).

Our preference is based on the gaffiti. Between two trees, a child (with wings on feet) is ascending, or crawling upwards. Beside the tree, there is an unidentifiable object.

Further, Papu cannot be admissible, because its vṛddhi would need W. (vṛddhi of the cupped A will admit this, because it is ambivalent, but so neat a scribe would not have allowed that. The parents seem to be Yādavas or Shaivite Brahmins, because they have put one of the two threads across.

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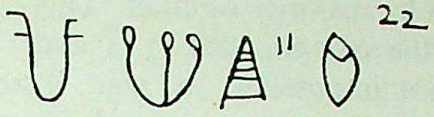
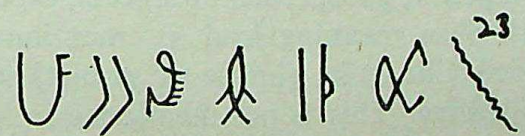


22. *Para S'rin Pappa Aya* (*Paraś'ri Pappay*)
For the Orphaned Child (Literally, for the dependant child)

Commentary : These parents brought up a fatherless and motherless child out of compassion, and developed an attachment for him. But it was not that intense as to make them forget his different parenthood. Or, may be, death rites demand that they disclose what claim they have on the child; and they must explain that this is a rite of compassion. Such S'raddhas have been recognised by the Smrtis, as claims of charity (Dharma). This leaves no doubt that Papa or Pappa is the affectionate word for 'child'; though Vedic Index does not give the word, nor does Apte, the context makes it clear. In our support, we draw attention to the fact that even today, in many languages including Kannada and Marathi, *Paradeśi* (a corrupt form of Paraśrī) means "a poor foundling", "the little dear", "poor orphan" and is an endearing term; and "pappa" or "papa" is used for a child as a term of endearment. This shows the importance of supplementing literary evidence with a living tradition, wherever available.



23. (*A*) *Ma Ri S'a Phaga Ppa Aya* (*Amaris'a Phagappayi*)
Ambarīṣ'a, the son of Phaga *i.e.*, **Bhagīrath or Nābhāga**

Commentary : After comparing several purāṇās, Pargitter places Ambarīṣ'a after Nābhāga, both kings of Ayodhya. We generally do not wish to contradict Pargitter. But Ambarisa seems to do so. Confusions have been rampant in the Purāṇas over this issue, because there are three Ambarishas, two Nābhāgas, one Nabhanediṣ'ta, a few Nabhas, and Bhagirathas; and the geneologists' memory has mixed

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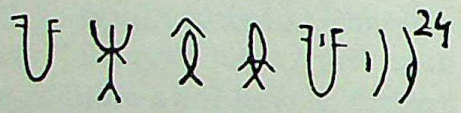
them up a little. Pargitter has gone by majority opinion. This clarifies the issue broadly. If we read the compounded P H and G sign with a N sign co-linearly, it is not impossible to read 'Nabhaga' here. However, some important purāṇas *have* considered Bhagīratha as Nābhāga's father. Had this not been so, our first authority would have been Pargitter, and we are very much aware of the use of co-linearity by the Harappan calligraphers. Scribes wrote for a civilization which knew these names and were not always mindful of the confusions they might create for a later age, separated from it by (in this case) 4000 years. Nevertheless, we can say that some, at least, of the Purāṇiks had seen the seals and were bothered by similar problems. We cannot fully explain the confusion of Purāṇas without assuming that some had seen the seal.



24. *Pra G. Kaya (Kiya) S'i S'ai Kra Ya*

Pragkaya Ś'ś'aikrayi (Prakkaya, the Seller of *LEAD*) Bottles

Commentary : Another name of a "commoner", though such epithets should mean, a non-king non-priest, prosperous bourgeois, especially when he is a seller of metal. S'īsa meaning lead is mentioned in the Vedas; but we have added Chashaka (bottle or goblet) mainly because 'cha' is only a duplicative. This is not mentioned in Vedas, but almost every Harappan seal shows a goblet and its use in a rite must be essential. This could have made the merchant rich. The graffito on the animal shows a beautifully bent goblet, obviously for wine. No lead vessel could have been that transparently pretty. The merchant is a Brahmin, a supplier to the choicest āśramas and much in demand. He could have bought himself a good sacrificial rite by offering a grand reduction on goblets. The thread is firmly across. This is evident that in Vedic times castes were not rigidly based on birth or profession.

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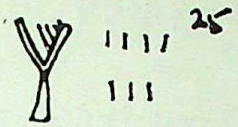
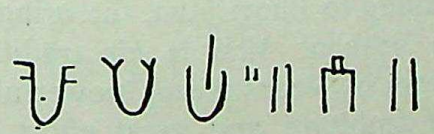


25. (*Cha*) *tus Tra S'aha* (*Turstras'aha*)
Trasadasyu

Commentary : From our experience of reading about five of the Tradasyu seals, we have felt that the man was obsessed with hiding his name on seals, not mentioning the patronym, and using a different and clever style of spelling out his name. One gets an impression that he composed their spelling himself; without some such "literary" pretension, he would not have written those Ṛgvedic hymns. His embittered life sought palliatives in generosity and ritual. Here, 4 is Tur(s), 3 is tra(s). That is a clever way of both concealing and revealing one's identity. Anonymity is valued in India, especially in religious gifts. Since life had been an irremediable burden for him, and ritual was a solace, he persisted in holding rites, keeping out local priests, hurting them by gifts to others, till he wiped out the memory of his birth and became a synonym for generosity. Vāmadeva who was an Āṅgīrasa brahmin and of foreign origin seems to have been much favoured by Trasadasyu.



26. (1) *Iya Sayika Ka S'as'a Ira* (*Iyasayika S'as'Aira*)

Ś'Aś'Aira, the Pupil of Vyāsa

Commentary : Ś'as'aira, popularly known as Ś ākalya, was a pupil of Dwaipāyana Vyāsa, not the later one. Iyasaika seems to be adjectival derived by vṛiddhi.

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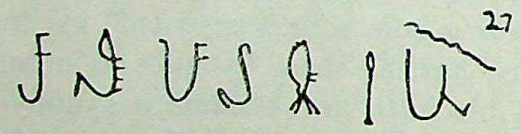
(2) *Is'agayika S'as'aira (by taking 2nd long and 3 short line together, 'g' is formed.*

Ś'Aś' aira, the Singer of Īś'a

Commentary : This second reading throws the awful suggestion that S'as'aira (Sākalya) is the author of Īś'a Upaniṣ'ad. But even discrediting this, the meaning is plain that he was singer of God's praise. A "S'akula" is mentioned in Vājasaneya Samhita of Ś'ukla Yajus which also contains Īs'a Upanishad (earlier version). However, Macdonell and Keith translate it as "an unknown kind of fish" (VI. 348). This needs more investigation. Vāyu and Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇas recognise him as Vedamitra Śākalya (or Vedamitra). The available version of Ṛgveda seems to be his compilation. The seal is small and broken and the strings or graffiti cannot be seen.



27. (*This seal is very much broken and the reading is not reliable*)
—(Ma) (S'a) vrs S'ak I phag I (Mas'a Vṛs S'aki phagi)

Translation : (The Ambitious) and sage Bhagiratha, the Scythian of Powerful Effort

Commentary: The seal seems to belong to Bhagiratha, the bringer of Ganga. Sad that this should be broken. Vrsi is his traditional appellation as philosopher-king; vrsh in Vedas means powerful; by tradition, he is associated with high ambition and great effort. But Shaka could mean Scythian; and most early kings of Ayodhya were foreigners. From the epithets, one is convinced that the makers of puranas were repeating what they read in seals.

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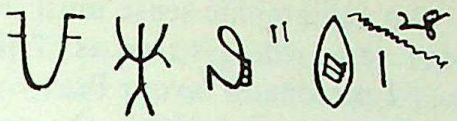
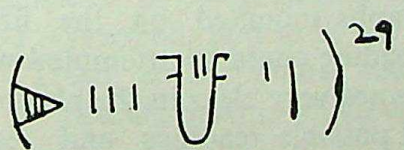


28. *Patha Phag Krar (Krir) Ha (Pasha Phagakirahaya)*
hv *Pasha*

King (Paza, Patshah) Bhagīrtha

Commentary: Compare the previous two seals in which Bhagīratha's name figures. (*viz.*, 23-27) where he is spelt not only with 'Phag' but once mentioned as a Śaka and as Ṛishi, (in the Fakir tradition, either by the hyponsis of his own name, or by the spread of Nakulīśa/Māheśa tradition). From the seal of Marka (famous by mistake as' Siva seal) we know that the latter existed very early, because Marka is said to be the son of S'ukra who was a guru for Yavanas. Marka may be the Mṛka known as Mārkaṇḍeya's father. Mārkaṇḍeya purāṇa is definitely of the Datta-Guru-Fakīr cult, because it tells the great history of the Guru of all gurus, Dattātreya, who later was known as Fakir. At any rate, no semitic name is as popular in India as Faquir, freely used up to Cape Comorin. Bhagīratha seems to be a Sanskritised version given by purāṇas after the long isolation of the "dark" age, when India lost contact with the Persian and Semitic world.



29. *Pra Ga Yo Tri Pra (Yava)*

[Pragyo (Pragyava) Tripra] Tripra, The King of Pragjotisha (Assam region) lit. Tripra of East)

Commentary : This proves that the Vedic culture had always existed upto Assam and probably Tripra or Tripura was the founder of Tripura. The starting P has a deeper curve than the final P; it

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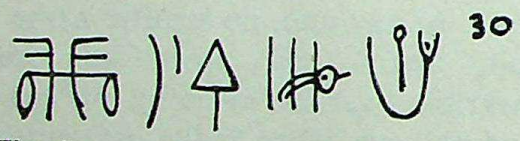
could be read as Rha, not Pra. But calligraphic sense must account for this variation. Even if the last word is read as 'Trihra' or 'Trirha', it makes little difference. I personally favour Pra.

MBh tells us that during the Rājasūya, Sahadeva, the youngest Pāṇḍu defeated the King of Tripura (Traipura), which account seems to be confused. The seal shows that Tripura was his first name, and country was Prāgjōtisha, unless we take it to mean, the King of the East. The graffito shows a huge bird which is neither a parrot nor a hawk and has spots on feather. The therad is firmly outside.

The Matsya account about the spread of Buddhism clearly refers to later history and does not mention personalities.

We reject the other possibility that this is a magical rite banishing insomnia to the 'devil of the East' (Keith, *RPOV*, 385). There is nothing magical in the seal and is so pleasant as to suggest a royal sacrificer.



30. *Warning*:

This is an important seal with great cultural-historical value, but alas, we cannot be certain about the correct reading of it. Its difficulties spring from two pictographs mounted on the first and second letters; the nearer correct reading could be attempted with the aid of the graffiti, but they are not very clear in the photo block. The best we can do is to record all possible readings and leave the matter to historians. (See Comments below):

Pictograph 1 could be read as Nāg, 'Sak, Bak

Pictograph 2 could be Vamr, Vṛs (or its variants such as Varsh, Ṛs'i, *etc.*). The "Tri" sign also has its variants.

Inspite of this, whatever the reading, there is a reference to some religious cultural movement, and an attempt to institutionalise it.

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Reading: (1) (omitting pictures):—Katri (Aktri) Dayapagapaya (Katri or Aktri,) the son of Dayabhaga/Promulgator of the Law of Inheritance among Sapindas). If Dayabhaga is only a mediaeval law-writer and there was no Vedic person of that name, this reading is wrong.

(2) (Taking the right side of first letter as Sh and the head of the nag as *Ai* sign (Shaik Tarvrsha Dagpayayayappa: Shaikh Turvas'u the guardian of the quarters, *i.e.*, borderlands, or overseas). This suggests certainly not China or a foreign country, but a North East border province of Yayāti's empire).

(3) Shak Trivrshda Aiyappai/Gayappai (The three Seniormost Scythic prophets or singers teachers). If this is the correct reading, we should fix who they are. Or it could even mean, the Tibetan teachers, because Trivish has always meant Tibet, even Mongolia. We suggest that they are: (a) Nakulīśa who gave the Pāsupata cult; (b) Marka who gave the Māheśa cult; (c) Datta,-Da, here, who gave what might be described as Sahaja or Samarasa cult, though this was partly Vedicized in the Brahma purāṇa; originally it was heterodoxy as seen in Mārkaṇḍeya purāṅa. All three are non-Vedic, mystic, anti-rite heterodox. All three are described as Ai (Adi), original, older,—a term common to the cults. (Gorakhnath mentions 'Ai Santana' in *Siddha Siddhānta Paddhati*.

(4) Nāg-ka Vṛksa (Tri (ka) Dayipa Aiyappa (This suggests that the originator of Nāgavṛiksha and Tṛka cult was the South Indian hero-god Ayyappan, said to be the son of Siva, but in fact, a philosopher. Trika is the famous Indian Neoplatonism known as 'Sktiviśishṭa or 'Spanda Sāstra, which came out in its full form in 10th century A.D.

(5) 'Sakti Varsha Trida *etc.* The ancients who declared the 'Sakti cult.

The last 3 readings make it important graffiti show tree, snake, and fish-fingers, rather illegibly. Till Alexandar's time, the "Snake-tree" legend was prevalent.

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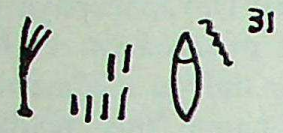
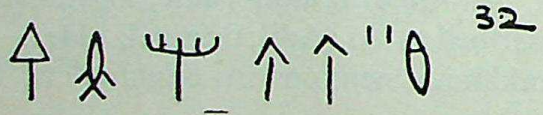


31. *Para Chatur Anga* (—*Para Chaturanga*)

Chaturanga, The son of (Roma) Pa

Comments : The seal is badly damaged and the first two letters are missing. Of note is the sign of 'ng and fire signal which marks several seals of Āṅgirasas. If the fire signal here is merely a damage, it has to be read as Chitraka, the other name of same person. However, this identification cannot be depended upon, and we are always threatened with Trasadasyu seals which extensively employ the '4' sign. Chaturanga was of Anu dynasty and his father was Lōmapāda or Rōmapāda. He is 66 in Pargitter's list. There is another seal in his name.



32. *Pāra 'Sa'sa Hae S'a Da* (*Pāra 'Sa'sa Hai'sada*)

Too many kings with similar names and patronyms for any accurate identification. It cannot be Haihaya claiming connection with Pururavas, several generations earlier; that is unlikely, and the finish and technology indicate a later age. Haryaśwa, the son of Para I (who lived the long life of three average kings) is more likely. Graffiti gives no clue. There are too many kings with their names beginning with 'Sa'sa; any Paurava could have used Para.

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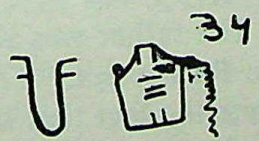
33. *Maha T Hasa S'a Mppa Ya*

Mahat Hasa Shampaya (If we read the V shaped A as S'): Mahashatahisa Shampaya) Samba, The Playboy) lit. Fond of much merriment).

This is the first of the series of Yādava Sātvata seals; most of them are of fine finish and artistic beauty. Sāmba was the handsome successor of Kṛishṇa to the Vṛishṇi throne. Yādavas were unaffected by Mahābhārata war and their progressive outlook and meritime trade had brought forth a huge burgeois class of rich Dwāraka citizens. Kṛishṇa seems to have neglected his family in his deep involvement with the politics of the Paurava-Kuru central power at Hastināpura. His children generally do not use the patronym. Some had become wild and undisciplined, while the commercial prosperity of the kingdom continued to grow. Sāmba, in particular, had developed intimacy with some of Kṛishṇa's junior wives and had been pulled up by his father. Bhāgawata describes Sāmba as a wild handsome rake fond of practical jokes, which in due time resulted in the destruction of Yādavas. Bhāgawata mentions that Kṛishṇa himself contrived the destruction of his dynasty. Sāmba. estranged, established a separate kingdom at Sāmbapura.

The animal is a zebra suggestive of the Hittite origin of Yādavas. One of Kṛishna's wives was a Śaibyā (either Yemeni or Abyssinian).



34. (*Patronym broken*)
Tribhana Tribau) I (Tribhanuyi)

Comments: Tribhānu, also known as Trisanu, belongs to the Turvasu

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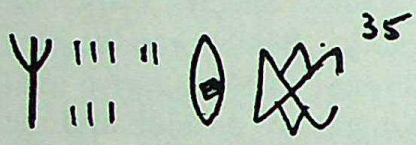
dynasty and 34th in the chronological list of Pargitter. The 'N' sign forms the top cap of Bh. Since it sits firmly on the Bh, we have interpreted it as Na and not Au. Au signs generally come above the complete letter a little away from the top.



35. *Pampa Pah Pañcha Tri Ka* (*Pampapah Panchatrika*)

Pañchashikha, The *King* of Pampā Citizen

Comments: Two number letters makes this seal yield various readings. The other possible ones are: (1) Ashṭaka (But he was king of Kanyakubja and son of Vishwāmitra. Unless we say that Pampa was in Kanya Kubja (— some might agree in support of their theory that Rāma never came to Ceylon, *etc.* -) there is no other association of Ashṭaka with Kanauj. Implausible. (2) The first two vertical short lines can be taken as Vṛiddhi sign in which case it reads "Pampapatha Tittirika (Tritri). This sounds good; but the association of Tittiri with Pampa is doubtful. The more famous Tittiri belonged to Āṅgirasa clan and there is no sign of Ng or fire signal here. The lesser known Tittiris belong to a much later age. (But we admit the possibility of Tittiri's identity, especially because one of his Samhita branches is known as a Kapibhuva (Chitrāv 216). (3) Shataka: but that is too obscure a name.

'Pañcha'sikha' has these advantages: (1) His father was Kapila, and Kapis are a tribe associated with Pampa in Rāmayaṇa. Thus he has the same advantage as Tittiri. (2) Despite the fact that he was born a brahmin, he is strongly associated with the great heterodoxy, the Pāñcharātra Siddhānta, possibly its originator. The name, the graffiti—which belong to this cult and the general finish of the seal show a later period. The Gita passage where it figures, cites Asita, Devala and Vyāsa as Pāñcharātra authorities; they were all dark-

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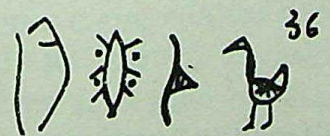
skinned. The passage proceeds to declare the Pāñcharatra philosophy, first with the strange introductory line, "Ask Asita, Devala, Vyāsa. Why, I myself am felling you this", and proceeds to say, "I am Sacrifice, I am Yajña, I am Swadhā, I am Mantra, I am Ājya", *etc.* South Indians were the earliest to recognise Kṛishṇa's divinity. Further, it is intended to swerve people from external sacrifice. (3) The sign inscribed into Pa is a clear h, not Th, because it is edged. Thus vṛiddhi is not needed. Hence the following vertical lines must form part of the numeral letter. (4) Historically it fits in. Kapila is described by Kṛishṇa as a Muni, a heterodox practitioner of tapas, not a vedic ritualist. This Kapila, as distinct from the earlier one (who burnt Sagaras) was a contemporary of Kṛishṇa. Panchashika is one generation later, when Pancharatra was institutionalised.

With this solid background, we suggest that this seal records the institutionalisation of the Pāñcharātra philosophy, though it was born during Kṛishṇa's life itself. It is to be noted that the cult gives value to only Kṛishṇa's good sons, Pradyumna and Aniruddha, but carefully keeps out of their symbology the sons alienated from Kṛishṇa, such as Sāmba. This can only be a guess. The identity of Pañcha's'ikha is a greater certainty; if his name is Pañchatrika, (and Trika means heterodox philosophy) it should explain the awkward name of the pāñcharātra philosophy. better.



36. *S'akHa RHa As'aiya Pappa* (*Shagarha As'aiyya Pappa*)
Shakhraha

Sagara, The Babe of Asita

Comments: The great Sagara (identified by Waddell as Sargon, the Conqueror) is born in tragic circumstances. Of special interest is 'Pappa', babe. This marks the birth of Sagara, a special occasion for the Ayodhya dynasty. Asita or Bāhuka was Sagara's father. From this seal, his right name appears to be Āśi, Ambitious; he

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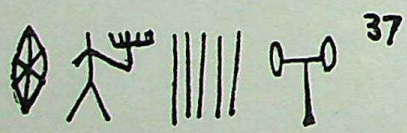
hardlyw as that. Or, possibly, Amśi suggested by the fact that he named two of his sons, Amśumañja and Amśumanta. Asita was a squanderer and rake, but he died before his son was born. Asita's senior wife, in collusion with the ministers tried to prevent Sagara's birth by poisoning the young queen Keśini. A kindly muni rescued her from certain death and that of her unborn child. The rivals took over the kingdom. But his birth was the birth of hope for Keśini. The memory of a libertine husband now became a sacred one. Aurvya, the sage, brought Sagara up to be a ruler. He grew up, organised the Himalayan tribals, and not only returned to power but swept the whole of the Indo-Gangetic plain.

This beautiful seal is most imaginative in the art of calligraphy. Āśi or Asita in the patronymous form is represented by the beautiful letter Śāi (i), which means 'sleeping' at the centre of the spread amidst four bricks,— the grave. Śakā' is shown as the mother bird. 'Rh' is shaped to look like the fledgling bird standing devoutly before the father's grave as the mother looks on. Pa and Pp'a stand like sages by the side. The scribe is handicapped by the small size of the seal, but does not sacrifice the beauty of the tableau. The design suggests a holy moment of adoration and memory. It uses not obscurity and numeral mystification. Had Sagara never been a great conqueror, this seal still would have immortalised him.



37. (*A*) *Ppai Panch* (*ala*) *Hairashkapa* (*Ppai Panchala Hairs'kapa*)
Hairashkapa, The King of the Easter Panchalas
(*B*) *Payupa Pañcha Rahai Kshapa* (*Payupa Pañcharahikshapa*)
Payupa, The Supervisor of the Five-day Rite

Commets: Ambiguity arises from the numeral word and the wheel shaped conjunct of P, S' and K, as well as the opening conjunct of two Ps and some vowels. We prefer the reading A because Payu was a distinguished king after Trasadasyu. He brought back some

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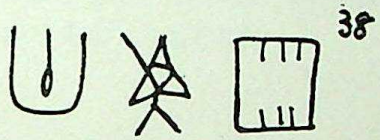
militancy into the passive rule of Ayodhya kings and won a few battles. (This is Haryaśwa II, son of Trasadasva, three generations after the generous and passive Trasadasyu).

The second reading cannot be ruled out. Payu, the priest does figure in the Vedas as a reputed Āṅgīra and though there are no Ng (fire) signals, the Hae letter is made to look like a five-flame tray in the hand of a man. But we prefer Haryaśva, especially because both the thread on the horse are firmly outside, a Kshatriya sign.



38. *Bha Dra(i) Paya (Bhadripaya)*

Bhadraratha, The Krivi King

Comments: With only this data, it is difficult to identify the person; even to examine the number of Bhadras sired by Vāsudeva, Kṛishṇa's father; all of them undistinguished, and all are named as exuberantly as he begot them. But 'Bhadraratha' seems to have the better part of the joke. He has left the mark of an insect on one side and the graffiti also has a similar small insect. "Krimi" is the word which describes them; and we know that Krimi was the son of Uśinara. Krimi set up a township named Krimila in some part of Puñjāb. Bhadripa is a king in that line. His very loyal subjects called themselves Krivis. The fact that Krimi was only a remove from Yayāti explains the single thread which goes across, but has two others firmly beside the shoulder of the animal. The seal is large, the lettering large and very neat, but rather work-a-day, redeemed by Bhadraratha's sense of humour. Heart can be large even if the name is Krimi!

If Ikshwaku be a Caucassian, cannot Krimi be a Crimean? Yadus in general are identified as Yatus of Siberia.

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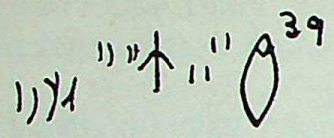
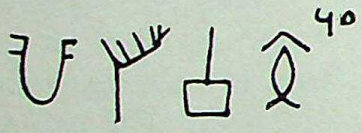


39. (*Note*: This seems to be either damaged or made deliberately illegible for the purpose of black magic. The latter seems to be more plausible, as the animal is surrounded by arrows and sticks. Even a suppositary rod is shown).

Pra Dwi S'a Chature/I S'a Pa Ra (Small letters) Pradwis' Achature/I, S'A, PA, RA. Four who hate me (their names begin with) I, 'SA, PA,RA.

Comments: The four short lines representing Chatur has a cross line at top, which we have read as E; but it may represent a stick or lightning.



40. *S'ai Ba Ha Ya:* (*'Saiba Haya*)

Haya, The Son of Saiba or 'Sibi

Comments: It is not unreasonable to assign this seal to the celebrated 'Sibi, the son of Uśīnara. who ruled over parts of Punjab known as 'S'ivis and is placed by Pargitter as 27th in his chronological list. Though he did not have a son named Haya, this could merely mean, "This horse belongs to 'Sibi". (Haya is horse). The finish and neat, mechanical lettering go against so early a king, but that is not a sure test.

We have reluctantly ascribed the seal to Harsha, the son of Kṛishṇa by Mitrāvinda who was a Śaibya princess. Two flimsy evidences are in his support. Like in all Yādava seals, the horse wears one string across, and there is a conch graffito on its body. But we are not altogether satisfied.

The great Śṛañjaya of Vaiśāli could have been 'Srī-Haya. A better suggestion could be the '*Saibya*, an ally of Pāṇḍavas, but his first name is not certain.

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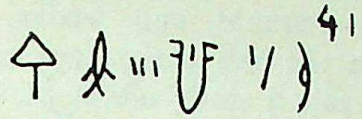
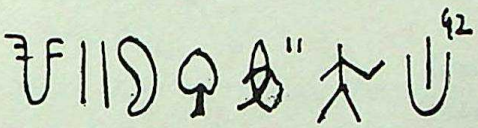


41. *Pra Ga Kiya Tri S'a Da*

(Pragaki(E)Ya Tri'sada) Tri'sada (Tripura) of Pragjyotisha

Commentary: This could not but have been the same Tripura of Assam (cf. Seal 29). We should be persuaded by the similarity of lettering, and more importantly, graffiti. Both horses carry one string across. Such paraphrased name variations are traditional from Harappan seals to the nineteenth century A.D., and are one source of Indian myth.



42. *Ka Ra 'Sia Pra* (?) *Aiya Hya*

(Karashiya Pralaihya) Pralhāda, The son of Karashy (Hiraṇyakasipu)

Commentary: This reading is a little doubtful, because the seal uses a new letter missing in Dr. Rao's table. A bent double P cupped below but open above. With some hesitation, we have read it as L. This alphabet is altogether missing in Dr. Rao's book. But it needs to be checked. Our supporting evidence is a similar L in early Phoenician, but much smaller and with a wider opening at top. This seems to have been derived from "Liṅga", but it will be commented upon on another relevant occasion. (Here it does not look like a linga at all. But compare the next Seal).

Strictly there is not much ground for objecting to Karasha or Kharashya being the father of Pralhada. Hiranya is only a tribe prefix, and the puranas mention a people named Hiraṇyake'sins. Pargitter has doubted the origins of the ṛshi Kashyapa and his hetrodox Naga sons for being foreigners. Waddell has gone further

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to say that most events recorded in Puranas and Vedas were memories of events which happened in the Babylonian region. The horse has zebra stripes which makes this a little more plausible. But that, for the present, must await further investigation. Karashya-Pa could easily become Kashipu; Pralaihya-hra, lhra, *etc.*, can be Sanskritised into Pralhad. (Compare Lanman's association of Nakūli'sa with Hercules). Kharasho means Good in Russian, and the word could mean, "A good Hiraṇya", and the tribal name could be the Hittite Haroun.

43. *Pa Ra Lha* (?) *Papa* (*Paralha Papa*)

Baby Paralha (*i.e.*, **giving delight supreme to others**)

If Paralha is Pralhada and this is the seal of a birth or childhood ceremony of the Kara's's (Hiraṇyakaśipu's) son, we know what his mother Kayādu meant by the word, specially because her first son was killed and the gods had promised her that the same child would be born to her. His birth gave her great joy.

Taittiriya Bra. also mentions Pralhāda, and so do several Purāṇas. The L letter has a slightly angular bottom here, in keeping with the calligraphic need of the Ha lines. It is badly damaged at the top of the last compound word, but can be read.

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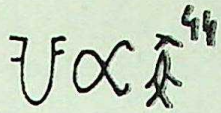
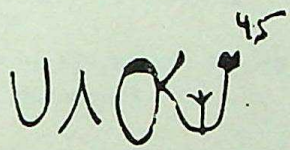


44. *'Sai Ma Yi ('Saimai)*

'Saima, The Son of 'Simyu

Comments : 'Simyu fought Sudasa at the beginning of the ten-king war and is associated with another king Dasyu (which for its similarity of name was mistaken for "dāsa" a slave. Dasyus were Dasyu's subjects). 'Saima apparently was his son.



45. *Pa Ka Maha 'Su Yi (Paka Mahashaya)*

Gentleman Paka *i.e.*, Baka Creat Eater Great Sleeper

Comments : Paka (or Baka) seems to have provoked much snyide humour among the scribes whom he frequented with his numerous sacrificial reports. There is always some ironical crook in their composition. Probably, he paid them well; or threatened to eat them. They pay him compliments, but the tongue is in the cheek. Another scribe too has played a similar trick, on which we shall comment (cf. 52). This Seal shows Paka with a fez on; (In 52, he is described a 'Saibya) a dragon is added to the opening P sign which is connected with M. K forms a trident midway, to please him; he was possibly a forest, guard, but sold meat (See 20) and turned cannibalistic, after making his Vamr forest destitute of animals. Here, poor Baka must have been called a Mahā'saya; but he does not know that the term could mean other things, e.g. Great Eater, Great Sleeper, *etc.*

The graffiti gives his correct address : Vamrādri,—Ant Mountain. or Kaitabhādri (insect mountain).

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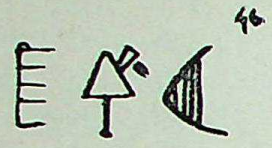
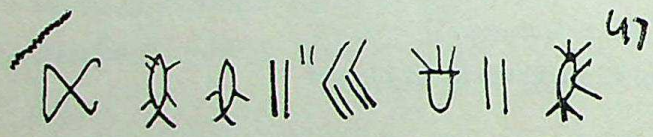


46. (?) *Gda Haha* (*Phagdahah*)
Bhagīratha

Comments : The first letter appears to be a new alphabet, P with a deeper spirographic curve. Or, it could on P bent deeper for calligraphic harmony. Hence, for the present, we read it as Pha (with H lines inscribed). A similar urge has made the scribe mount D on G. The double H is also mounted. A beautiful piece. In further support of this reading, compare the other Bhagīratha piece, No. 28. Both these seals show a Tree graffito.



47. *Mahha Dwi Paka Hasa Dwi Sha Shai Ma* (*broken*)
Patra *Deva*

(*1*) *Mahhadweepaka Patrahasadevesh Shaima*—(*'Saima, ruler of the Maha island, son of King Hāsa*)
(*2*) *Mahadevaputra Hāsadwis'a Shaima* (*'Saima, son of Mahādeva, hater of Hāsa*).

Comments : Other readings are possible. The main certainty in identifying the owner is the reading Saima or 'Sa'saima, but alas, the last letter is broken. If this 'Saima is the same as 'Simyu, whose Seal (No. 44) is seen already, we are in a fix. There we considered 'Saima as 'Simyu's son. Here, one of our readings shows that 'Saima's father was Mahādēva, or Patrahasa. We already know that 'Sivis were a tribe in Puñjāb, and it could be guessed that they were also called 'Simis. Obviously, 'Simyu and 'Saima are the same. The Vedas mention him as a persistent hater of Sudāsa. Hence the safest guess is that the name Sudāsa could be a colloquial version of

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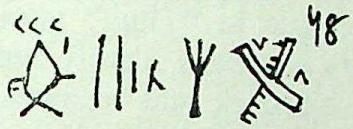
some name like Suhasa, or 'Sudhā-Hasa; and if the second reading is right, 'Simyu includes his enemity for the person he describes with contempt as "Hasa". The latter is plausible. Vedas and Purāṇas would not have made special mention of personal hatred had there not been written evidence, apart from political confrontation. 'Simyu was killed by Sudāsa.



48. *Taha K Gsha Ii (Y)a Shas*
Tha

(Tahaksha Yeeyashas') Taksha, The Son of Yashas/in Desire of Success (of his Enterprise)

Comments : Takshaka was a chief of Nāga tribes settled in Himāchal Pradesh, close enough to Delhi to harass the borders of Paurava kingdom (Kurujāṅgala). Strict neutrality in the Mahabharata war had increased the Naga power and weakened the central administration at Hastināpura. Parīkshit (grandson of Arjuna and son of Abhimanyu predeceased), who succeeded to the Pāṇḍava throne, decided to perform a "snake sacrifice" on complaint from Ruru whose wife was abducted by the Nāga tribals. This mythified account can be interpreted to mean that Parikshit raised an army and arrested the tribal chieftains. There is an account of how Uttanka, who was carrying the gift of gold ear-rings for his teacher's wife was robbed of them by "Takshaka", *i.e.*, a Nāga disguised as a "Buddhist" Kshapaṇaka. (This account confuses the chronological factor, late as it is. What appeared to the Puraniks as Buddhist dress is the normal dress of Himalayan Nāga tribes (*i.e.*, Tibetan dress). On their complaint, Parīkshit took up this enterprise and killed some 18 chiefs named in the Bhāgawata Purāṇa. But Takshaka, who had suffered in chilhood at the hands of Pāṇḍavas, vowed personal vengence against Parikshit, after being arrested and

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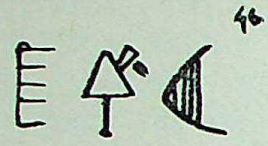

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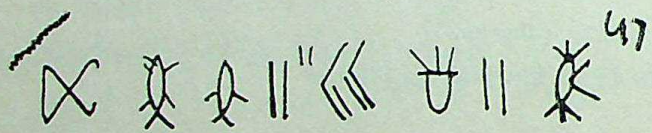

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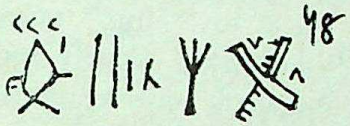

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Comments : Takshaka was a chief of Nāga tribes settled in Himāchal Pradesh, close enough to Delhi to harass the borders of Paurava kingdom (Kurujāṅgala). Strict neutrality in the Mahabharata war had increased the Naga power and weakened the central administration at Hastināpura. Parīkshit (grandson of Arjuna and son of Abhimanyu predeceased), who succeeded to the Pāṇḍava throne, decided to perform a "snake sacrifice" on complaint from Ruru whose wife was abducted by the Nāga tribals. This mythified account can be interpreted to mean that Parīkshit raised an army and arrested the tribal chieftains. There is an account of how Uttanka, who was carrying the gift of gold ear-rings for his teacher's wife was robbed of them by "Takshaka", *i.e.*, a Nāga disguised as a "Buddhist" Kshapaṇaka. (This account confuses the chronological factor, late as it is. What appeared to the Puraniks as Buddhist dress is the normal dress of Himalayan Nāga tribes (*i.e.*, Tibetan dress). On their complaint, Parīkshit took up this enterprise and killed some 18 chiefs named in the Bhāgawata Purāṇa. But Takshaka, who had suffered in chilhood at the hands of Pāṇḍavas, vowed personal vengence against Parikshit, after being arrested and

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saved through the intercession of other ṛishis with whom he was popular. His plan of vengence (See 2nd reading above) was to send a poisoned fruit camouflaged among others as a gift from Āṅgīrasa ṛishis. Parīkshit had to eat in deference to them. The mythified form tells us that Takshaka sat in the fruit disguised as a worm, came out in snake form and killed his enemy despite all Parīkshit's precautions). Or, he might have sent his men disguised as ṛishiputrās, one of whom was a professional strangler. This guess is based on the actual account in which Parīkshit is reported to have died of strangulation. (Takshaka is a word close to "Thug" (strangler) which could have been a derivative). It has been clearly recorded that Parīkshit took the "worm" close to his neck and recognised his enemy before he was noosed; and that other ṛishis and guards in the hall were helpless spectators. Since there is no record of Takshaka's own assasination following this, we can only guess that the youngish looking rishiputra might have met with vengence later; *i.e.*, he was a member of the suicide squad.

Obviously, this records a rite held by Takshaka seeking luck for his number enterprise, only a guess, of course. But lack of patronym suggests some such rite. (Unless Takshaka's father was a Ya'sas, which does not seem to be likely. We can only await the reading of any one of his three famous sacrificial seals). Vengeance apart, he was a popular king of Kurujāṅgala, close to Delhi.

Of great interest is the pretence put up by Takshaka's assasins. It is that they had come to bless the king with hymns from Atharvan Veda. The predominance of snake lore in Atharvan points to the fact that Atharvan mainly issued from the Nāga sources. The later seal of Pippalāda will demonstrate this. Pippalāda was the compiler of South Kashmir recension of Atharvan. This Veda can be considered as Nāga contribution to Indian culture chiefly.

Another important detail given by Matsya Purāṇa, which supports this suggestion, is that after the death of Parīkshit, and till the throning of Mahāpadma, the king of Nandas, passed a period of 1050 years of unrecorded history, *i.e.* India's 'dark age' (See commentary on Seal 14). Matsya is considered a fairly reliable Purāṇa by Pargitter.

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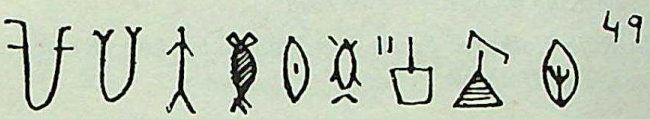
Thus, 'Iyashas' becomes the desiderative form of 'Ya'sas', not a patronym. 'Iyashase' can be translated roughly as "This rite is performed in the hope of success for a specific enterprise', an important statement needed in every rite (*e.g.*, Swargakāmah, desirous of heaven *etc.*), and hence Gīta condemns all rites performed with a selfish intent and supports that rite which is done without any desire, for its own sake. We have seen Seal No. 39 done with the intent to kill or hurt enemies; what is common is the bad handwriting, needed for such rituals. Especially the letter Sha which resembles a man, has on its top, what looks like a firm rope for strangulation. The thread on the horse is made to look like a noose. It is difficult to read the graffiti from the photocopy.



49. *Paka Dau Bha A Shae Pa Vrs'A Ra S's'a Yi* $\overline{Rasha}$

Paka Daubha Ashe Pa (Pā) Rasharashiyi Baka Dālbhya is Blessed by Parāśara/ Parashara

Comments : Very important, because this seems to be a complete sentence. This is the convocation Seal of Baka Dālbhya (strictly Daubha; the surname, "Dube" is still prevalent and is considered to be the Prākṛit form of Dwivedi) while graduating with Vyāsa of his father Parāśara. Baka, the son of Dubha, was a pupil of Vyāsa; but we are unable to be sure whether the 5th letter is Pa or Pā. If it is Pa, one can only guess that the father of Vyāsa was present at the rite and was asked to preside. Baka Dālbhya was a learned, but retiring man; unlike Vyāsa, he took little interest in collecting the lore and was not one of his co-editors. But he and Vyāsa presided over Yudhisthira's Rajasuya. The other stories in Purāṇas about him broadly stress his retiring nature, but some are fantastic. He was wearing a peepul leaf on his head to shelter himself from the sun. On being questioned by Arjuna why he did

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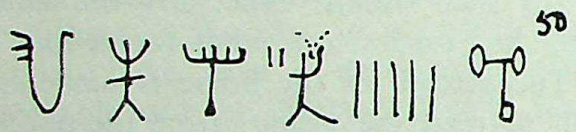
not build a house, he is reported to have said, "Because life too short". If Rāmayaṇa story is credited, he usually stayed in the South; he later presided over the Aśwamedha of the Pāṇḍavas.

Purāṇas are of two opinion as whether Baka and Dālbhya were two persons, probably misled by the letter A; it should be read with the next letter.



50. (*Note : This is capable of several readings*)

(*1*) *Pprag Pāñchala Rāja Hai Hra Iya Pragpañchala Rāja Haihaya Haih (R) Aya, The King of Eastern Pāñchālas*

(*2*) *Papru Pāñchala Rāja Haihraya Papru Pāñchāla Rāja Hath (R) Aya Papru (or Babru), The Haihaya Prince of Pāñchālas*

Comments : The above two are most plausible, and it is futile to associate the name of Babhruvāhana, the prince of Maṇipura unless, we unwisely think that Assam had five people, but even so, Haihaya will be inexplicable. Neither Arjuna, his father, nor Chitrāṅgada, his mother, was connected by blood relation with Haihayas. The second reading seems to be more suitable, because this Babru was the son of Vi'svāmitra of Kanyakubja which is nearer Pāñchāla. The first seems to be the most satisfactory (See 51). The R is obviously added to read 'Hraya', punningly to suggest 'conquest'. Another reading could be 'Haya Kriya', horsedealer of Prāg-Pāñchāla; we prefer to assign it to King Papru the King, in the light of the 51st Seal.

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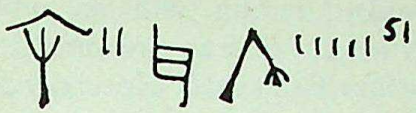

51. *Pāñchāla Hai Hae (Y) A (Y) Aiḳa*
Kaiyya

(Pāñchāla Haiheyakayya) Lord Haihaya of Pāñchālas

Haihaya, the son 'S'atajit, belonged to the Yādava dynasty, but he so distinguished himself that his descendants called themselves Haihayas. He belongs to the 14th slab in Pargitter's synchronistic list, *i.e.*, 16 centuries before the Mahabharata war.

52. *Paka Maha Pada 'Sai Ba Ka Yi*
Shaada
(Baka Mahashada 'Saibakayi)
Mahapada
Gentleman Baka, The Abyssinian
The Great Eater Baka, May he be A Corpse

Comments : Poor Baka is again the target of the literate scribe's tongue-in-cheek humour. While writing Mahāpada, he has left the D end open, so that it reads Mahāshada—the glutton. With 'Sai, he had left an additional A mark, quite superfluously, which should make no difference in the phonetic value. But it allows him a private joke. The vrddhi A, joined with the next Ai, would read, "Ayai 'Sava"—"May he be a corpse !" Baka, the cannibal, was quite religious, and the first lot itself contains as many as five seals if we include the broken first seal, which does not have his name. Baka does not seem to be literate. Or else, he would have seen through

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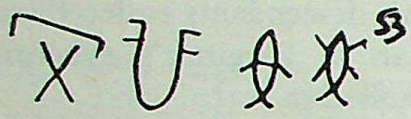
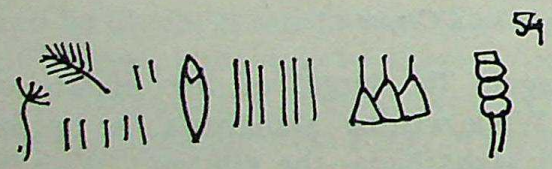
the game. The scribes must have looked on him with an unwilling sense of humour, taken the miserly fee out of fear and immortalised him with such humour. (Also see other Baka seals especially 56, for scribes' mischief).

'Seba is generally identified as either Abyssinia or Yemen.



53. *'Se 'Si Ya Tau ('Se'si Yatau)*

Comments : One look at the mournful face of the horse should convince any one that this is a death seal. The graffito shows strange vehicles rather resembling the Vimanas of temple architecture. Evidently, the father has lost two children ('Se'si, probably in dual number of the common gender noun 'Si'su); and the dual number of Yatau leaves no doubt that about the dual tragedy. They died within twelve days of their birth and must remain nameless. If we read a pun in Yatu, they belong to Yadu clan, but we cannot be sure of royal lineage in view of the fact that good many commoners in Yadu princedom have left their seals.



54. *Bha Adra Shaṭ Papa Pañch Pa*
Baha Adri Sat Pañchatam Apah
(At top : Vimana)
Bhadra Satpapa Pañchapah/Bhadra Shaṭ Papa Pañchata Apah
Six Children, Princes of Pāñchāla;
Of Bhadra (Kshatriya) Family
The Good Child of Bhadra Dissolved into five Elements,
And other permutations.

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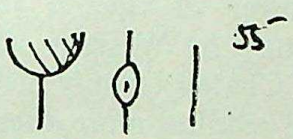
Comments : Since the seal is anonymous and only mentions Patronym/ Surname, it is safer to retain the original form Shat, *i.e.*,, Six, and not read it as Sat, *i.e.*, 'Good'. Papa, here, would be a term of affection rather than mean a babe. Obviously, it is a post-war seal in which the father who has lost six children mourns their death. He is bitter, judging from the word Pañchatam, for the wastefulness of these deaths. His name may be Bhadra, or this refers to the Bhadra or Kshatriya community. The word Bahadur seems to have been derived from this word. Closer study of the graffiti might give a clue to the details about time and place.

Apaha will make it a complete sentence. But singular.



55. *ATha Ha A. (Athah) Or B. (Athah)*

ATha Ha

(*A*) *1. Atha, The Editor of Atharvan Veda*

2. Atharvan Jaradustra, the Prophet of Persia

(*B*) *3. The Practitioners of Atharvan Veda, i.e., Nāgās*

4. The Persian Community

Comments : The first is the safest reading. Atharvana Veda is comparatively later, and it is the only Veda named after a man. The graffiti comprises letters which can be read partly : "Bhaga Asatha..." The last three letters seem to be in Phoenician script. If this can be guessed as "Bhaga, the son of Asita"..., we have the name of the leader of the Athas who performed this rite, or, if we are luckier, the name of the compiler of the A.V. itself. Since Asita was a senior contemporary of Arjuna, this Bhaga could be a contemporary of Pāṇḍavas. Inspired by the work of Vyāsa's pupils, and himself being a 'S'ūdra or Pāñchama ṛishi, he might have undertaken to compile the tradition of the mantras among common people, and with an even hand, written them down, or memorised them. Like the pupils

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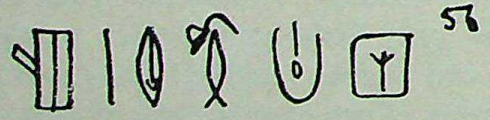
of Vyāsa, he might have named the Veda after his guru-father, *viz.* "ASITA VARNA VEDA",—but the contents of the Veda (Black Magic) and the name (Asita-black) might have had a dangerous unconscious implication; and, in time, it could have changed into Atharvan. The lettering has a post-Yādava Vṛishṇi simplicity about it; the horse and the entire seal, is so enamelled as to give a sense of blackness. This sophistication places the seal rightly into the chronological order,—Harappan, but very late,—during the late Pāṇḍavan or Parikshit age. We have already seen how Takshaka's assasins pretended to be Atharvan reciters, and how Parikshit suspected the Nāgā association and was resigned to his death. (See comments on Seal No. 48).

The main objection to Jaradustra association is that he is firmly anti-Black Magic, he is a follower of 'Spenta' (Spande philosophy) and is held to be 6th century by Western scholars; and Indian scholars like Jatindra Mohan Chatterji firmly place him in the 15th century B.C. The latter opinion requires more attestation; and we would love to place this seal for evidence. We leave the work to Persian scholars for lack of sufficient knowledge of Persaniology.

The plural form is too ambiguous. It requires that we take this rite as one meant to celebrate A.V.'s institutionalisation.



56. *Baka Pa Shaida Pih I Tri-I S*
   (*A*) *Bakapa Shaida Paha I Tri-I Sa* (*Baka of Nishadas, A Monarch*)
   (*B*) *Changing Syntax* : *Baka Pashaida Pahi Trayyasa* : *Save Me, Cannibal Baka, Eater of Three* (*Men At A Time*)

Comments : The joke has gone too far. Baka has smelt mischief, or some one in Ekachakra has warned him of the scribe's jokes. Or, he is angry, because he is Paka, not Baka, and how can goods of sacrifice recognise their feeder if his name is misspelt. At any rate,

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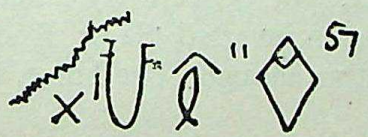
he has rejected the seal or refused to pay, and the scribe has left it unfinished and un-enamelled. No doubt, the scribe meant mischief. Baka was never a king, and yet, he calls him sarcastically as Patrish (Patshah, of the King of Pada). But his intent is more mischievous. Since the Harappan script (and for that matter Sanskrit either) did not use punctuation, ambiguous syntax must have been a source of a good deal of humour. But he went too far. Not only did he suggest that Baka ate three men at a time, but he drew the diagram of those victims just on the back of the horse (and according to A'swamedha ritual, the killed horse went to heaven); Baka could read the malicious diagram if not the script. That might have been a current scandal which had reached Baka's ears, and he did not stand this. Thus, it is left unfinished and mixed up in the scribe's shop, and later, reaches Vyāsa's library. (The other Baka Seals : 52, 45).

Of interest is the 'Aiba' sign, on top of 'Sa, made with a stock stamp; 'ba' was to have been erased later; but the scribe's work was interrupted.



57. *Pya 'Sai Yya A Ta.....*

Paya (*Two letters broken*)

Parashaita (Son of Pṛshat)

Comments: In the existing condition, only the patronymic phrase is retained. Prshat's son was Drupada, the Panchala king, the father-in-law of the Pandavas. After Pṛshat's death, he seems to have succeeded to the throne of the Pāñchālas. The fact that he changed his capital from Kāmpilya of North Pāñchala to Ahicchatra of the South Pāñchāla, is the story of justified usurpation. South Pāñchāla was for a time usurped by another king, but the central power at Delhi

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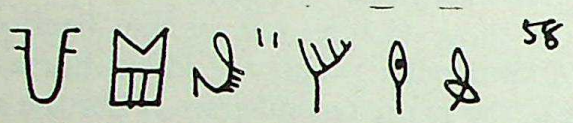
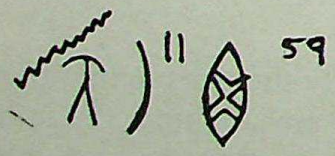
dethroned and killed him, and turned a Nelson's eye when Drupada took over, being of the same stock. This must have led to frustration among other claimants. They have removed Drupada's name but let Prshat's name alone, mindful of the peaceful neighbourly relations he had with the South Pāñchālas.



58. *Papa Pay Ha Pahaga Ggahayo Yi Papa Payhapahaga Gchayoyi*
The Babe who Asked for Drink (Suck), but Passed Away.

Comments: This again seems to be a rite for a dead child before he could be named; and probably the mother insisted on detail—that he died before the suck he demanded, could be given.

Dr. Rao, in his mimeographed 'Language and Writing of the Indus Valley People', has rightly placed the Ay sign (embedded in P) as Late Harappan. The general finish (of rather mechanical kind) as well as lettering easily places this in Vṛishṇi age and area; there is a vimana sign on the horse's stomach, but deliberately extended to resemble a Vṛishṇi Chakra; and there is an inverted 'Sa or P on the thigh. The latter is not communicative enough. The horse, like all Yādava seals, wears one string across.



59. *Pata Pra...(broken)* : *Pata Pra—*
Not communicative enough in the present broken condition. It merely means King Pra—

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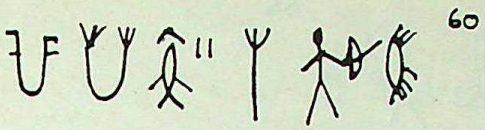
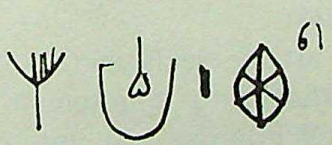


60. (*Krimi*) *Dwara Ka A'Sai Kka Yi*: (*Krimi*) *Dwaraka Ashaiyikkayi a*
Doorkeeper of (the Palace of) Krivis, For a (Certain) Wish

Comments: Another magical rite, probably with the intent to kill some enemy or an unpleasant boss. His enemy could be some one named Vṛisha, or may be, he considers some one as a scorpian. He has let the sign be written on the front thigh of the horse for enemy's early despatch to the other world, alas, for that is where the horse will go. But he is content to let his enemy leave his presence. He has shaped the string like a noose, or may be, like an elephant pincer. The fish sign at the centre declares his second best desire that the enemy be drowned and be food for fish. The last best comes on the thigh-bone, that he get lost in a forest—represented by a tree. The cup is tilted to drain his life out. Obviously, the doorkeeper belongs to the Krivis, because his name begins with that pictograph. The stripes are a tight noose on the horse's neck. Thank god, both are dead.

The anonymity is understandable. The cause must be served, but the causer's name should not appear, not only for the scandal, but because the gods of sacrifice might confuse the issue.



61. *Paraka an Shaha* : (*Paraka An'saha*)/*Ka'sapa Jasah*
An'sa, the son of Puruhotra/Ya'sa, son of Ka'supa the King

Comments: Both mentioned in Puranas, sometimes as Kuruhotra and Anu. Both variously named Amavasu, II, Kushiha, Vasu, Yashovasu, he belonged to Kanyakubja. Both not distinguished. Certainly, not Anu, son of Yayati. A later period.

62, 63, and 64. Completely broken.

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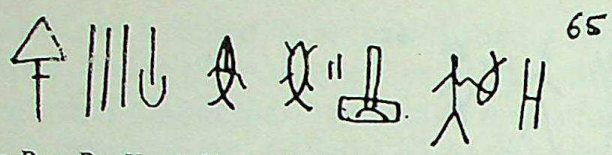

65. *Ha Pau Ru Ka A Shae Shi Ka Trasa Dta* : (*Ha Pauruka Ashaeshika Trasadta*)
   (a) *Trasadta* (*Trasadasyu*), *seeking the Blessings of the Said-to-have-Lived Purukutsa*
   (b) *Trasadasyu, Said to have been Son of Purukutsa, Seeking Blessings.*

Comments: Though the reading is the same, the second construction more accurate; the first is not ruled out. Both are tragic and bitter. Trasadasyu never saw the face of his father, and later, was taunted of not being the son of his father. His mother Purukutsani was a Pitṛakanya, *i.e.*, Purukutsa's sister too. Her *niyoga* with a brahmin named Samha or Simha in the long absence of Purukutsa has already been referred to. Thus his mother was his auntie too. Unable to hate or love, to change or redeem, Trasadasyu lived on spending his long life in religious rites. (See other Trasadasyu seals, 3, 19, 25 *etc.*). If the first interpretation is intended, the occasion is 'Sraddhā, and yet he knows Purukutsa is not his father. The second is more general. In either case, the irredeemable iron in the soul is revealed. If we consider the visual 'night-march' arrangement, we can guess that this rite followed his escape from Divodasa's prison. As in his Rgvedic hymns, he appeals to his enemies that though a successor, he continues no hatred of his father 'Daurgaha', and is not even his son.

This is probably one of the most artistic seals in this bunch of hundred and one. The letters are arranged to represent a night march with torches, flags, and shields. Of grammatical interest is the use of Ha, the ironical remote past used adjectively, "Said-To-Have-Lived". He has not even seen his 'father'. Trasadasyu was a hymn maker. We give below some of his Rgvedic hymns, two on his ambivalent parentage, one on his release from captivity.

These are by Trasadasyu himself:

The following hymn of Kutsa (different from Purukutsa) mentions Trasadasyu's escape from Divodasa's prison. It makes

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no mentions of 'Sambara, Trasadasyu's Rākshasa friend who died in the fray, but after breaking open the door of the fort.

v. Vāmadeva's hymn records the fact that in due time, Trasadasyu had become legendary for his gifts had wiped out the memory of his parentage; but he chose Āṅgira (Nāga) brahmins and avoided local denigrators.

Translation:

(i) When my respected parent(s) were/(was) in prison, the seven ṛishi constellation begot (me) Trasadasyu,—(me) who am an Indra, not four Vṛitras, but rather a demi-god.

(ii) O Indra and Varuṇa, Purukutsani (my mother) appeased you with salutations and oblations; and you gave her (me) King Trasadasyu, who am killer of Vṛitra and who am demi-god.

(iii) I am Indra and Varuṇa. When this large world was plunged in one profound darkness, alone, I like Tvashtra, knowing all the worlds, I brought order in it. I bear the heaven and earth (on my shoulders).
I made all this. Do not consider me needing protection from others. There are none as great I am. I am incomparable. When the moon himself is plunged in illimitable darkness, he borrows (eats) my rays (to shine).

(iv) *Kutsa's hymn*: O Aświns, when forts were broken, you rescued Trasadasyu. Come now with those very helpful implements.

(v) *Vāmadeva's hymn*: To me who am a son of Āṅgīrasa, Purukutsa's son Trasadasyu is (the only) giver of gold. (Also see our comments on Bloomfield's observations on hymn 3 given under Seal 73).

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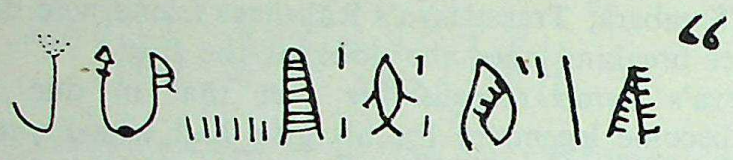

66. *Haha I (yy) A Paha A Shai*
A Dah Sat Dwa Jit
Sat Ai

Hahaiyyapaha Ashaiyyadaha Sasdi Jit
Hahaiyyapaha Ashaiyyadaha 'Satajit
(Also, Dah can be read as Dha)

King Hahayya (Haihaya), the Performer of Sixty Horse Sacrifice Seeking Blessings for a (Soliciting Fulfilment of a Wish) for Fulfilling a Desire (Ada Apta) or 'Satajit Seeking the Blessings of King Haihaya

Comments: We reject the reading of the second last letter as Ai, instead of Di, and in fact, it need not even be mentioned. Nevertheless, we have mentioned it for yielding some future result. The reading is based on the mirror-image structure of Brahmi A. We request readers not to take it seriously at all. Now, for translation: No king would have sacrificed sixty horses unless he had some particular ambition fulfilled. Therefore, the first general wish for blessings is ruled out. No sacrifice of such magnitude is performed for a mere blessing. Though 'Aishaishada' could mean "desirous of" (Asha), the second translation is nearer the present phrase. We could guess that his founding of Ahicchatra kingdom could be one, though there is no specific mention of the event. Haihaya was the youngest of the three sons of 'Satajit, and had no chance to be king. But he founded the Haihaya dynasty.

Another more plausible reading is: Hahaiyya Ashaiashad S'atajit : Shatajit, Seeking the Blessings of Haihaya. S'atajit was the grandson of Haihaya and son of Sahasrajit. Here, we have to read Sat as S'ata; and the reading of the mirror image of Brahmi A with an embedded I sign might show that the letter existed though for calligraphic reasons it was seldom-employed. These are very early kings, and we have to posit the theory that Brahmi 'A' pre-existed in early Harappan, but remained dormant till 3rd

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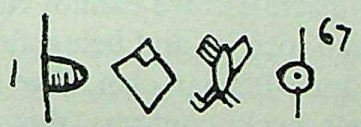
century A.D. when As'okan scribes revived it. Here it would read, Satya or (by 'Yan' sandhi or Satai).

The third reading (reading Dah as Dha) yields a third translation, Satyajit, Obtained by the Blessing of Haihaya, in which case this seal may well be taken as making the naming ceremony of baby Satyajit. Graffiti of three fishes might support this and a U-shaped sign with a baby inside may be a cradle.

Our support for the first reading is based on the assumption that it would have been natural to spell out Satyajit or S'atajit the performer's name or the name of the christened child, rather than cause unnecessary mystification and waste of space, making all other letters small.

Keith in his monumental *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda* (p. 366, n. 1) mentions an offering to goddess "Shashthi" and identifies her as goddess 'Sri'. For all we know, this may be a sacrifice of sixty animals rather than an offering to god Shashṭi. Keith calls it a 'late' ritual, but Haihaya is an early king. Being expensive, it might have been rare. Hence the special boast, "One who accomplished the Sixty-horse rite".



67. *Atha Rvasha Ppa Raha* (*the last A acts as single vrddhi sign*).
    1. *Atharvasha Paraha*
    2. *Tharvasha Pparah*
    3. *Atharvasha* $\frac{\text{Parhasha}}{\text{Parshaha}}$ (*Taking into account the thin Sha at end or Rha*)
    4. *Tha A Vrsha Ppa Raha*

Translation:

1. Atharvasha (Atharvashirasa), the Pupil of Parā ('Sara)
2. Turvasu, the Descendant of Pururavas

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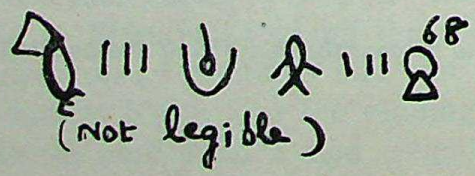
3. Atharvasha, the Persian/the Pupil of Parā'sara
4. Atha Vrs (Rsi), *etc.*
5. Tha (Y) Ara Vrasa Pparaha (Sthavira Ṛishi Para ('sara)

Comment: If the third and fourth readings are correct, we are justified in identifying this as the seal of Atharvan Jaradustra. Jarathustra calls himself 'sphita', which is a form of 'Seta, and means the same thing,—*viz.*, White. Among Parā'saras, one of the branches calls itself "'Seta". There is a later Parā'sara branch of story-tellers who call themselves 'Gauraviti' (The White Path) which might be the same. Among the list of original S'eta Parā'saras, the name "Sravistayana" is the nearest to Jaradustra, but another name, "Isheekahasta' is also not far, and the two names seem to belong to the same person, Jaradushtra, though mentioned separately to complete the figure 'four' for each branch. So many coincidences cannot be wished away. Further, one of the Parā'saras is called Sthavira, which brings the identity closer. There seems to be a deliberate double pun used by the scribe: *viz.*, Atha-Tha-a-ra on one side, and by thinly and unnoticeably adding 'Sa at top of Rha.

The second reading would make this a seal of Turvasu.

The first reading is general.

We prefer the 3-4-5 readings. There were several Pārā'saras and Jarathustra might have been one of the disciples. We cannot rule out the entire Pārā'sara clan having a Persian origin and being familiar with the language. Parshadhas were an Indo-Persian clan. The Krimi sign at right-hand top and on the horse's neck confirms this. This confirms Waddell.



68. (*Note*:—*This is a curse seal, and the letters are deliberately erased; hence, the reading can only be approximate*).

Pa Da Tri Sha Pa Trishah (*Padatri 'Sāpa Triśah*)

Three Curses on the King/Three Curses on the Foot Soldier.

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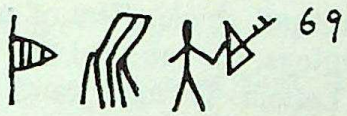
Comments: The horse is marked with several small weapons and poisonous insects; and the usual plough in the behind is also seen. No other identifications are clearly seen. The lettering is deliberately erased. The crown placed on horse's back is meant for despatch of the king and the cup is made to look shattered at top. The animal's eye is whitened to make the king go blind. But it could be a turban and might as well apply to a soldier.



69. *Dwaraka Ra Has S Raha*

Sah

1. *Dwārakarasahasrah*
2. *Dwāraka Rahassarah*

Translation

1. One Thousand Carpenters 2. Citizens of Dwāraka

Comments : We prefer the first meaning; especially, the graffiti shows some trees and one tree is being sawed. Further, with the fondness for double meanings found in many other seals in mind, we could even interpret the first reading as "One Thousand Carpenters of Dwāraka; it is obvious that this is a guild of a thousand; such guilds are often mentioned in later stone inscriptions as much as their smaller counterpart, the guild of a hundred. This gives the extent of the prosperity of Dwāraka with its international trade and commerce. Mahābhārata war did not affect Yādava Vṛishṇis, but much of war-time profit seems to have reached them, as recorded in the 11th Chapter of Bhāgawata.

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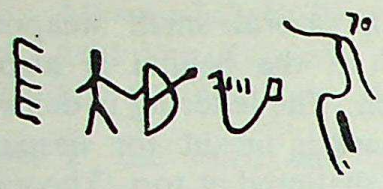

70 *Garuḍa (picto.) Ratrika Dwara Gaha Garuḍa Rātrika Dwāragaha Night Watchman, Garuḍa*

Comments : This beautiful tablet is a masterpiece of illumination and artistic composition and could be compared favourably with Trasadasyu's Seal No. 65. The latter has the best distribution of letters. This seal shows an imaginative light and shade effect of the kind which Rambrandt's 'Night Guarḍs' employs, though the latter works, of course, at a much higher level. Letters 'Dwāra' stand like the night watchman alert with his bow and arrow, seeing illusions of fear before and behind him; the pictorial hawk at the corner emphasises the effect of loneliness. The rest is darkened and only the letters are illuminated for torchilight effect, represented by the 'Rātrika' letter.

Apart from these aesthetic considerations, an interesting point is that this lonely night watchman, Garuḍa should have become the legendary vehicle of Kṛishṇa in the purāṇas a thousand years later, and in the Adi Parvan of Mahābhārata, a symbol of reckless adventure with deep anthropological significance. (He carries the 'golden bough' to the nither world). He becomes the prime symbol of Vāsudeva cult. Strictly, the word 'Garuḍa' merely means "a guard", and the latter words is derived from the same root. But Garuda was a night watchman; obviously, the phrase should mean, "the night watchman of the rank of Garuda". Later etymological exercises such as "guru" (heavy), "Garutman" (heavy man, or "feathered person") add little to the simple but great fact. The clear 'Saṅkha sign on the body of the horse shows that he worked with the Vṛishṇis and the fish sign that the town was a port, *viz.*, Dwāraka. Hence, we are justified in recognising in him the source of the later Garuḍa legend. Censer is small, but carries the same illumination. (Dwāraka, like most of these seals, carries the pun-of Dwārakā).

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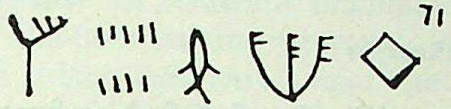
Since 'Garuḍa' means an eagle, the purāṇikas added their rich fancy and made him Vishṅu's 'vehicle'.



71. *Pa Hahahak Sha(t)Pan(cha) (Cha) Tus Shaha*
Reading : Paharakshat Pantushaha

Translation: Parīkshit, The Great Grandson of Pāṇḍu

Comments : It is difficult to explain the three 'H's in Parīkshat unless we assume that his real name was Paryarakshit; and further, the strained puns generously added are legion. The wonderful idea the scribe has in using numbers is to suggest that (a) Pāṇḍu's sons were five. (b) That Parīkshit was the fourth generation from Pāṇḍu. (c) To smuggle one of the 5 lines and make it look like T to complete Parikshit's name, without damage to the 'Five' without which Pāṇḍu will suffer. (d) He expects us to read Pāñch as Pan and Chatur as Tus, and then Pantus as Pāṇḍu.

All this punsterism has unnecessarily complicated the name and Patronym. Only, one factor seems to justify this. Parīkshit's life was always threatened by the next of kin, as the sole survivor of Pāṇḍus. He himself might have advised his Purohits to keep this rite secret and use some such code. He was the son of Abhimanyu (Arjuna's son) and Uttara. The word 'Pariyakshit' should merely mean—'injured by the nearest relatives' and 'parirakshat' should mean 'protected by the nearest'. Pari must have been romantically considered as Vishṇu's Chakra (wheel) and said to have protected him even when he was in his womb. Poisoning and Black Magic was gaining ground during the Late Harappan period as seen in the numerous magical rites recorded in these seals of Takshaka, Pippalāda, and others. (For comments on Takshaka's seal and Parīkshit's death, see Takshak Seal).

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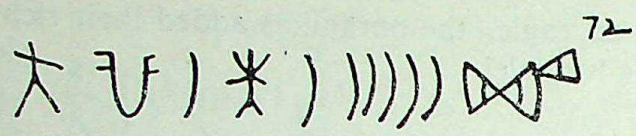

72. *Hahaha Pañchapa Pa Tra Pa Yi*

Kra

Reading : Hahaha Pañchapapa T(K)Rapayitr

Translation : Hahaha (Sahasrārjuna) Who has Satisfied his five sons is kind to the children of Pāñchāla

Comment : After much labour, we have arrived at this rather satisfactory reading and identification. Hahaha can only be the Prakrt form of Sahasra. Pargitter blandly states (p. 102) : "Haihayas comprise five families", but does not state when or why the split occurred. Sahasrārjuna became a popular monarch by his bravery, courage, and his highly philosophical mind. He was a pupil of Dattatreya. He become a legend in his own life-time. But alas, his name was Hahaha in popular langulage, and he himself belonged to the Haihaya lineage. He gave his five legitimate sons a share of his empire; and in their gratitude, they decided to call themselves after his name. But, Hahaha, adjectivaly Hahaha, is too close to Haihaya, and thus it is but natural that the old name 'Haihaya' should continue. There are fantastic stories about him. He is said to have been born a cripple; that he conquered the world; but that because he stole Jamadagni's cow Para'surāma killed him, and all his thousands of sons except five. But details of his meteoric career confirms that he was a just and brave king whose last years were blotched by the single event—his defeat and death.

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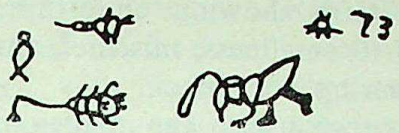

73.. (*Semi-pictorical satirical allegory* : *Boar and Scorpions*).

Description : A brilliantly illuminated piece showing an impressively built wild boar walking vigorously, all its attention on distant heavenly object which has cast a mild light on him. He wears an enormous crown extending from his forehead to his back,—an honour and a burden. The rest of the space is in dark. On the foreground is a long, clearly etched scorpion crawling fast to catch up with the boar. In the background, a vague dark scorpion or some other crawling creature is also trying to overtake the boar. The arrangement is so visually realised with the fullest exploitation of light and shade that in less than an inch, the vast distance between these two and the boar is immediately discernible; and so is the distance between the boar and the heavenly object. The total indifference of the boar toward these creatures and its fixed attention to the luminary in the sky are made clear by using the impressionistic method; as much as the hurry and flurry among the scorpions left far behind. Behind the scorpion stands a boy or a worm.

This is a masterpiece of the impressionistic method in illumination. On closer examination, we find that the picture is made up of letters which can be read :

Boar :	Head and front two legs :	T
	Crown sitting on head and back line :	Rha
	Arch of 2nd and 3rd leg :	Sa
	Fourth leg with illuminated line or back :	Ta
	Illuminated part of the short thick tail :	Pa
		Trasatapa

Scorpion : The full body of the scorpion could be read as 'Vṛischika'. Its sting is lashing, and made to look like Ka. This may be for recognition, *i.e.*, Vṛischika, or a more contemptuous term : Vṛischikaka.

The little figure at the end, either Kṛimi or boy could be : Kṛimi or *Jana*

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or any other contemptuous term showing childishness and mischief. The main suggestion is of its smallness, mischief, ambition, precocity, ineffectuality, but overbearing activeness.

Comments : This is Tradasyu's response to the malicious campaigne let loose by Vrisa Jan, his priest. The background story, as narrated in *Brahaddevata* and *Pañchavimśa Brāhmaṇa* bared of its mythical trappings, can be narrated thus : Vṛisa Jan (whose other name is Vaijan, and thus suits the picture of the ignorant boy behind the scorpion) was a young priest to youthful Traiyyaruṇa, prince of Ayodhya. (We have preferred the name of Trasadasyu who is five generations earlier, in Pargitter's list. But other Purāṇas have often called Trasadasyu as Traiyyaruṇa which could have been his second name. It is not difficult to read Trayyaruṇa's name in the 'boar' picture by telescoping it as Triruṇa. Head, front two feet and cross lines on head make it Tri; crown is Ra or Rha; Two hind legs and tail make it Na. But, Tris'ata makes a more natural reading. Moreover, an imaginative composition like this is more naturally attributable to a composer like Trasadasyu. There is a composer named "Trita Apatya", the Son of Trita, which might well be Traiyyaruṇa (1.105 Rg.), But Dayānanda has identified him as Kutsa or Āṅgirasa. Hence, for the present. we take that this seal belongs to Trasadasyu Traiyyaruṇa, the tragic king, whose name is clearly mentioned in Ṛg, not the later Trayyaruṇa. Once, Vṛisha joined the king for a ride in his chariot and insisted on holding the reins himself. The horses scared and ran over a child, who apparently "died", *i.e.* lost consciousness. The dispute between the king and the priest concerning responsibility was taken to court on which a king of Ikshawāku line presided. His award was based on the circumstantial evidence, *viz.*, that Vṛisha had the reins in his hands and hence was guilty. This was taken by the Brāhmin community as a partial award, and, for a time, a boycott of (probably both) kings Trasadasyu and Ikshvāku followed. Seal No. 3 is a clear index of the tactics adopted by Vṛisha Jan. He mischievously raised the issue of Trasadasyu's birth by performing a rite in which the tablet used the clever double edged inscription : "Samhapara Trasadasyu Putradha",—which might mean, "For the well-being of Brahmin Simha, who begot Trasadasyu". It was no secret

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that Trasadasyu was not exactly the son of Purukutsa, and that his mother performed the *Niyoga-yajña* for Indra and Varuṇa and co-habited with Simha to beget a successor for Ayodhya throne, a rite sanctioned by law and religion in which the entire brahmin community must have been plied with food and gifts. Purukutsa was then, either in captivity of Kā'si kings, or was already put to death. At any rate, there was no serious disputant to the throne; and Trasadasyu's claim was derived from four sources. That he was the son of Purukutsani, the sister-wife; that she performed *niyoga* for the specific purpose of bringing forth a successor; that it was ratified by law and religion and that he owed it to the gods who presided over the rite to be a king; and that he was more than a king, being half-god (Ardha-devam) carrying out their task. The scandal and boycott hurt him deeply. The injured boy was revived; and the claim of Vṛisha Jan that this "miracle" happened through his prayer and in vindication of the justice of his cause, must have built up his personal prestige in the eyes of his community; and given easy circulation to the mud-slinging compaigne, he or his followers had started. While Vṛisha's case might have had its justification, the attack was on a spot where the king was most vulnerable and cannot be described exactly as fair. But his objective was very clear, as evidenced in the Ṛgvedic prayer he composed :

brahmani atreh ava tam srjantu ninditarah nindyasa bhavantu

Translation : "Save god, the mantra of an Atri; bring him (the boy) back to life; make (my) denigrators denigrated." Therefore, it is plausible that after gods heard Vṛisha by bringing the "dead" child back to life, Vṛisha gained confidence and proceeded to make the other part of his prayer come true by a systematic campaigne of denigration. How else to explain the mischievous Yajña done for Simha and the mischievous legend. Some other somples also can be cited :

kumaram mata yuvatih sam ubdham guha bibharti na dadati (dhadhati) pitṛi

Translation: The young (virgin) mother finding that a child is conceived in her, secretly gives birth to him and refuses to present him to his father (or conceives him not to his father).

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kam etam tvam yuvata kubharam peshi bibharshi mahishi jajana
Translation: What rotten burden did you conceive, Queen, in your state of maidenhood, (hid) in your garments and brought him forth?

The Vedic commentators have translated these verses in many ways, but the broad meaning is neither holy nor symbolic. They are uttered by a desperate man who has priestly immunity and who now uses it to utter imprecations against the queen-mother and her son.

Some of the king's reactions, desperate, tearful, megalomanic, we have already seen. (See comments on 65). But, in addition, Trasadasyu started the other campaign of holding large, generous, eye-filling rites (presumably bringing famous Āṅgirasa priests from outside, especially Vāmadeva and Kutsa, and no inviting Vṛisha). Thus, he started a reverse boycott. In due time, his generosity wiped out the scandal and was sung about by Vāmadeva and Kutsa in Ṛg. hymns praising his goodness and gifts. (Hence, Kutsa must be some other ṛishi and could not have been Vṛisha; he already has four names: Ātreya, Vṛisha, Jana, Vrsha Jana, Kumāra; why give him one more name when the King has added Vṛischikaka?)

Only one last substantiation. What is the heavenly object which illuminates the wild boar alone and leaves the scorpions in darkness? Why does the wild boar gaze so intently on the star and what star gives him courage to ignore his enemies? That gives us a clue to poor Trasadasyu's compensatory megalomania, so much misunderstood by Western scholars like Oldenberg and Bloomfield. These great interpreters have concentrated on Indra and Varuṇa, forgetting Trasadasyu, the singer. They have considered the hymns of Trasadasyu as praise of these gods, forgetting that they are a self-drunk megalomanic's desperate praise of himself as 'Ardha-deva' and attributing to himself the doings of gods. They have considered the hymns as a debate between Indra and Varuṇa, but Bloomfield is aware of something being wrong. "It seems to me that the right starting point for its understanding has yet to be found. The hymn (4, 42, 3b quoted under Seal 65) is, in my opinion, neither dialogue, drama nor disputation ('streitgedicht'), but a self-laudation of the dual divinity, Indra-Varuṇa." (Bloomfield: *Ṛgveda Repetitions*, p. 233). Bloomfield's suspicions are right, though his suggestion that it is the self-lauda-

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tion of the gods is incorrect. It is Trasadasyu's self-laudation as a son of two gods. The hymn is a desperate reply to Trasadasyu's denigrators", I am not what you think. I get my authority from two gods. I am a half-divinity. As my progenitors bear the burden of the entire universe, I, who am their segment—'amśa'—bear the burden of my kingdom". That, symbolically is represented in the picture as a crown worn half on head half on back, both an honour and a responsibility. It is from the two progenitor gods that the king derives his light and is carrying out a small part of their own function. Hence he gazes on them and can afford to ignore his enemies, especially when they are kumāras and vṛischikas. I think I have not overstrained the situation; rather understated it. No words can express the poignancy of Trasadasyu's human predicament. The great thing is that the embittered king could still make his life sweet.

We now understand why Pargitter quotes the famous passage from Vāyu Purāṇa: "Interpret the Veda in the light of Itihās and Purāṇa". To read Vedas autochthonously, without reference to the history recorded (albeit, in a highly mythified way) in Brāhmaṇas, Upanishads and Purāṇas, leads us to the kind of misunderstanding just illustrated. Even the best of histories, after all, are events telescoped. Purāṇas which collected the ballads three thousand years after the events, found them in a highly mythified form and retained them; and themselves added their own reasoning in the same vein. But they were pledged to truth. The truth had put on fancy dresses; but that does not mean that the loyalty to the human drama loses its interest for us. It merely confirms the persistent human pattern of behaviour in history. Our aim in making these remarks is not to slight the work of the great savants, but to stress the validity of Pargitter's (and to some extent, Waddell's) theories and vindicate the methodology adopted for this book. Another lesson is that Western thinking on poetry needs to be expanded into the concept of 'poetries'. Prayer is also self-expression, if we understand the painful, megalomanic ravings of poor Trasadasyu.

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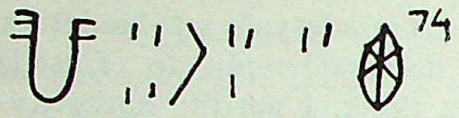


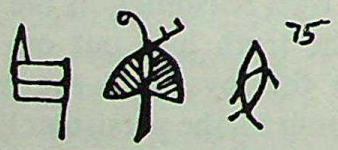
74. *Para'sa Dwa (Y)A Pa Ya Nayi Para'sa Dwa(Y)Apayanayi*

Translation: Dwaipāyana, the son of Parā'sara.

Comments: Our interpretation of the opening wheel-like letter is based on the clear notch made at the top suggesting that Sha is meant and not Ka. The last cup-like letter, at the latter end, is hand-pressed and made Na.

The seal proves that Dwapayana (later Sanskritised into 'Dwaipayana') is Vyāsa's christened name, and 'Vyāsy' refers to his profession; *viz.*, editor and collector.

There are clear letters on the animal's body, but it is difficult to read them. One looks like Ma with its closed end below and open end above. The other is clearly a'Sa. The letters on the thigh and thigh-bone are not clear. It could be his mother's name prakrtised, "Ma'sagandhi" or 'Ma'sakali'; if so, Vyāsa seems to be proud of his mother. Both strings are across and 'Sa sign is written on the front foot, may be in clarification of the 'Sa in the wheel. We were very happy to read this seal of the great poet.



75. *'Sin Ja—As'wi Gaha 'Siñja As'wigah*

Translation: 'Siñja, the Singer of A'sin (Hymns)

Comments: We are not altogether satisfied with this reading, because (a) In Dr. Rao's key, (Lwivp), the logograph As'wa is shown as a single leaf with its veins neatly spread on either side, not a double leaf with cross lines. But we have taken this to stand for As'wa in the feeling that the aim of the scribe is to mount it on 'A' cup and has chosen to give this visual effect of the letter weighing evenly on the stemp like a sack or cotton.

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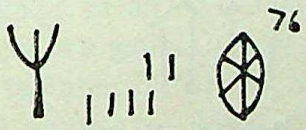
'Siñjara is a late Ṛg maker figuring in 8th and 10th books of Ṛigveda. He is distinguished as a worshipper of As'vins and the rest of the reading seems to fit in. 'Si is co-linearly connected with the two 'A' lines, and can be read as 'Sin'. This becomes necessary because in the base of the next letter, one of the arms ends in Ja sign. (In the light of this we have desisted the temptation to read the name of king 'Sini, the son of Anamitra II of Ayodhya. 'Sini is important enough to have founded the dynasty of 'Sainyas. But the Ja rules him out. Moreover, one of the strings is across, unusual with the kings of Ayodhya). The word Ga at the end clearly suggests that he was a singer and hymn maker. The main problem comprises the difference between a single and a double leaf. We await clarification and guidance on this. We have taken reasonable precaution by comparing similar signs in Marshall's list and find that this reading agrees. But such logographs are stock in trade, and one cannot be sure unless one checks the letter against wider sampling of similar figures. Alas, they are very few to go by in Marshall's collection.



76. (A) *Paksha Tur Ka*: *Paksha Turka.*
Tr: (Four) Turkish Pashas

(B) *Paksha Chaturaka*:
Tr: Chaturaka, the son of Paksha

(C) *Pati Chaturaka*:
Tr: King Chaturaka

(D) *Para'sa Chaturaka*:
Tr: Four Pupils of Parā'sa(Ra)(?)

(E) *Kapasha Turaka*: *Tura Kavasheya* (*Priest of Janamejaya I*)

Many other combinations thereof.

Comments: Reading is simple. But to pinpoint the identification is difficult. Was there a country by name Chaturaka? Was there some king of that name? Did Paksha, the son of Anu, have a son of that

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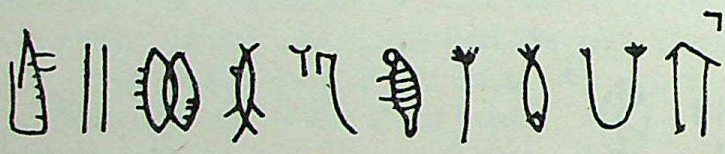
name? Had four Turkish princes come to India to perform some rite? Were they merchants? The Turk was not very familiar to India. The word 'Turushka' appears only in Purāṇas, not Vedas. Is Jaradushtra, the pupil of Parā'sara, wrongly described as a Turk? Or, were four pupils of Parā'sara, convinced that every millenium must have four Parā'saras, the law-givers, and since they were pupils of Parā'sara, they must institutionalise their work (Law books of authority); and did they jointly perform some sacrifice? The best answer is he is Tura Kava'seya, the royal priest for Janamejaya I, mentioned in Pañchvimsha Bra. However, the other identifications are equally justifiable. The possibility that Jaradushtra is wrongly described as Turka is supported by graffiti which comprise some figure, all showing a man with a bow and arrow, one mounting an animal, rather in the Persian style. Kavasa is also a Persian name, Kapasha only its Indian pronounciation; the last seems the best.



77. *Ai Gi Rash Paha Pah Vrs' Pag Ka Sha Pag Pha Ai Lsa*
Deva Dash Shaha Lasa

Reading: 1. Aigirashapa Pavrspagkasha Pagpa Ailasa

Translation: Aila(U)Sha, son of Āṅgīras, King of Far Eastern Kingdom of Pragjotisha

Reading: 2. Aigirasapa Pavrshrag Kashap Pappailsa
Or
Devadashashah Vrshpa Gkashap Pappailsa

Translation: Papalsha (Pippalada), the son of Angiras the Rshi of Kashap Lineage of Far East

Comments: In either case, it is a name written in a mixed up style. G is used for emphasis, substitute for visarga or duplication of the

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next consonant. Pavrsh, according to Apte, is an archaic word which means 'remote'. For all we know, it might also mean Paroos, *i.e.*, Russia, at least Russian Mongolia, if we go by the predominance of the gutteral 'g'. If we take "Ailsa" to be the sacrificer, we can identify him as father of Ailusha Kavasha, an Angirasa, *i.e.*, a man of heterodox opinion coming from Nāgāland; suspected of being a gambler and sent out of a sacrifice performed by his king Kurus 'ravana', but composed those beautiful verses in the 10th book of Ṛigveda which made the gods refuse to take the oblations until he returned and was made to preside. His claim to have belonged to royal family of Aṅgāmi Nāgās would also change his identity, and we will have to pass it on to Ilisha, the king of Yunān in China, mentioned in the less reliable document, *Bhavishya Purāṇa*, which we have generally not employed here.

The second reading makes the seal belong to Pippalāda, the editor of the Kashmir recension of Atharvan Veda. Devadri'sa, the pupil of Vyāsa, in the Atharvan branch, was his teacher. He belonged to Āṅgirasa gotra for which we have evidence. Pippalasha and Pippalāda mean the same thing, the eater of berries. The word Ka'sapa is a general term for all those who study snake-lore, and every member of the Nāga community can lay claim to Ka'sapa-and-Kadru parentage. Atharvan is full of snake-lore. He is also associated by birth with the tree lore, which also forms a part of Atharvan. He is said to have "created a demoness", *i.e.*, Kṛtya to harass his father over some tiff. This kṛtya seems to be the practice of making an effigy and burying needles into it so that the hurt reaches the person it represents. There is evidence for this cult also in Atharvan. Pippalāda is associated with astrology (Saturn propitiation) which again finds a place in Atharvan Veda. But a far more solid evidence is available in the graffiti on and around the body of the horse. Since the full name and address are written on the seal, it can hardly be described as a magical seal made against him. On the other hand, these marks, probably, are the Vidyās (magical arts) of which Pippalāda is master and whom he wishes to propitiate for having made them serve him. In fact, this rite itself seems to be for the propition of his Siddhis (powers). Just below the

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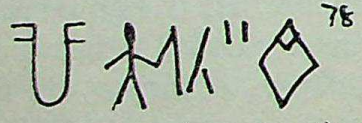
lettering, there is a Kṛtya, symbolic of the effigy lore. By her side is a serpent. A cock and a lizard ride the back of the horse. Cock sacrifice is closely associated with magic; lizard bite and scorpion bite are subjects of Atharvan. The strangest fact is that on the neck of the horse rides a kangaroo and baby, or else, my eyes are playing tricks with me. Where could he have seen a kangaroo? Or is it only a monkey? Insects like bees buzz round its nose, and one is sitting right on it. On the body of the horse, there is an unbent swastika and some other magical diagrams. An arrow or some such weapon has gone halfway into the groin of the animal. The illuminated mark in the behind cannot be described an iron plug. On the floor are marching innumerable creatures of strange shapes, but at least, there is one medicinal tree, suggesting his knowledge of medicine.

This seal deserves to be subjected to expert linguistic study. Our own double reading is based on whether the line at the top should be taken as 'Ai' sign or it is merely the natural fold of the clay tablet. Unable to decide we have to give both readings as well as the 'Ilsha' reading.



78. *Ppa Wi Ra Yi*: (*Prāveerayi*)
—
Wa

Tr: Prāvīra, Son of pravīra

Comments: The double P suggests that it is formed from Pra. The sharp line from top of 'I' is so narrow that it cannot be Ga, but must be extension of Ra.

However, from the other seals, it is apparent that scribes have played with the G sign. What now is a fairly clear Wa sign can be read as inverted Ga, the top line generally omitted as elsewhere. This

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suggests two other readings:

3. Ppaigarya (Pragarya):
   Tr: Arya of Prāgjyotisha
4. Ppageerayi (*i.e.*, Bhagiratha; this is quite plausible because, Bhagiratha has earlier spelt his name as decided by the scribe, Phag, Pahag, *etc.* Nor has Bhagiratha mentioned his patronym at least once).
5. Papa Veeraya: Makes it a mourning rite over Veera.
6. Papawaraya: This last reading is equally plausible and suggests that rites were held for Prayaschitta (penitence). The cold anonymity suggests that it is deliberate.

1. *Reading*: We cannot labour to identify the many Praviras mentioned in old texts and the other Paravīras who might have been born over a land stretch of 2,000 miles over a period of 2,000 years which is the "Harappa" of this book. However, the lack of patronym and any other identificatary sign suggests something. The identity is so close that it need not be mentioned. What is that?

Bhavishya Purāṇa, whose testimony we generally ignore for the purpose of this book, mentiones a Pravārika (Reading 1(b)), who established a Mauni dynasty at Kilakila, identified recently by one historian as Mohenjodaro (Mounadwara). (See Bhāgawata, 12.2). This is post-Buddhist history. But he could have smuggled his seal to establish his ancient lineage. The ruins of the ancient city might have been his stronghold, and he might have established a library of these seals stolen from the neglected places of ancient kings, especially Dwāraka which then was no longer a centre of power. The 100 skeletons discovered in Mohenjodaro probably account for the surprise raid of this gangster. All this can be based on the premium we place on anonymity as evidence.

If punsterism of the scribes can be depended upon as a long tradition, we can even suspect that Pravīraka, the grandfather of Chitrangada of Manipur is the owner of the seal. The scribe has certainly made effort to make the composition read both Pravīra and Pragyoby writing the W as if it is inverted G.

Our preference is for the last. The question how the seal came so far does not arise, because in this very lot of 100 seals, not less

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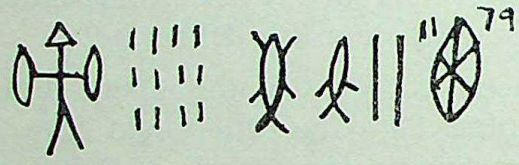
than 6 are from the Prāgjyotisha area. We require a general theory of the seals for which the reader is requested to refer to Chapter I. The theory that Harappan seals belong to Harappa and Mohenjore seals belong to Mohenjodaro, by this time should have been dead as dodo. The seals belong to the general Vedic age which had its human beings—its Trasadasyus and Vṛish Jans, carpenters and night watchmen, bereaved fathers and penitent sinners.

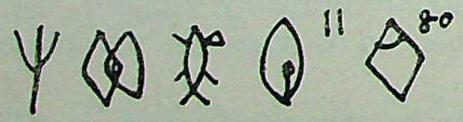


79. *Pasha Aya 'sa 'sai Tri-Chatus (Trasadasu) Prajapa*
Parasha

Reading: Paksha Aya'sa'sai Trasadasyu prajapa
Parasha

Translation: King of Ayodhya, Trasadasyu, The Protector of poeple. Son of Puru (Kutsa)

Comments: One more sacrifice performed by Trasadasyu. (See earlier Trasadasyu Seals).



80. *Lharpa Pada Shaipa Papra Ka*
Para Pos Shae

Readings Lharpada papraka parap oshai papraka

Translation: Papraka (Babhruka), The son of Lhompada (Lomapāda)

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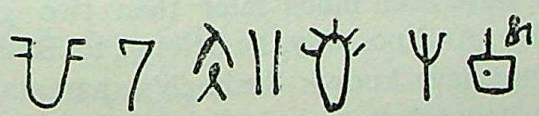
Comments: Babhru succeeded to the throne of Lomapāda, the Yādava king of Vidarbha. He is described as Devavṛiddha, a foundling brought up by others. To obtain this double meaning, the scribe has strained himself miserably.

Three lines of P are thick, one line made thin so as to make it bot L and P. The inscribed P is supposed to represent both R and P. The tail-end of L is given a brush to suggest H.

The embedded sign inside the next P can be read as both D and Ay or O. An unnecessary Shae sign comes next whose real aim is to form Posha, but also reads Padashae. What is common to both is the name of the owner Papraka. Hence the two readings:
Lrahapadasha (Child of Lrhapada)/Paraposhayi (Foundling)

As for the first letter in Lomapāda, L is an ambivalent vowel belonging to the Raḷa-Kuḷa class of South India, and one suspects that it has something to do with sounds like HER-DRA of Greek. Lomapada could be Lrh Pada, for all we know. Hair on the legs of kings is rather an un-royal subject, and must have been the pronunciation of later Purāṇic compilers who were beyond the reach of the king's wrath. (Bhāgawata names one of the kings as 'Puriṣha-Bhīru' in which not even a letter brings credit to the king; Book XII, Chap. II, St. 26).



81. *Ba Ka Lha Ia Shai Ga Yi*
(Bhkalha Iyashaigayi)

Translation: Bakalha, The Pupil of Vyāsa.

Comments: Bashkali, the supremo among ritualists, and a fine poet who made even Vyāsa a little jealous, is a poor brahmin who performs his humble sacrificer, prepares a home-made homely seal and donates it to a museum. Bashkali's works did not get immediate recognition. Vyāsa disliked his narrow-minded ritualism. It is obvious

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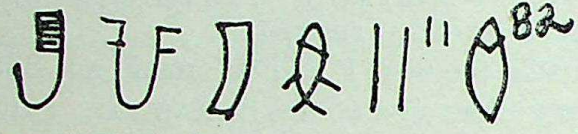
that the seal lacks any professional finish in either lettering or in enamelling. But, soon, he was to be prosperous. (See 82).

The L is a consonant.



82. *Para Yi Shi Pa Yi Lha*

Parayi'si Pailha

Translation: Pailha (Paila or Bashkali), The Pupil of Vyāsa (S. of Parā'sara).

Comments: Bashkali is now recognised as a scholar and an authority on law (or else, why should he claim that he is a Parā'sara?) and on ritual. The lettering is far better and the work of a professional. At the same time, we discern communalism at work. Some one has sliced off the fore-legs of the horse of this and the previous seal, but retained the lettering. This vandal (whose time we are unable to fix) belongs to the post-Janamejaya 'dark age', in which caste based on birth not on profession, was established in India. In some respects, this mutilator is far more important for us than Baskali. He could not have been much later than two generations after Bashkali or Paila. And possibly, he belongs to Bashkali's family. Or else, he would not have known Bashkali's parentage so intimately. Bashkali, in the Vedic style, must have considered himself a Brahmin because of his learning. But his kinsman does not like this. So he removes the forelegs of the horse on which the thread must have been across. But he has respect for Bashkli and does not multilate the name. Had he not been a kinsman, he would have gone about mutilating the seals of others like Vyāsa himself.

India's "dark age" commences, not with the seal, but with the mutilator. Mahābharata war increased the self-consciousness of the professions and tribes and a period of the falling apart of 1050 years followed. (See comments on Seal 14).

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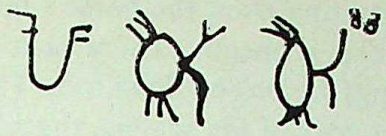
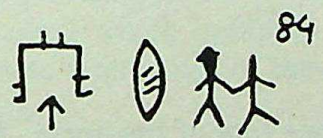


83. *Mha Mha Yi* : *Mahamahiya*

Tr : The Greatest of the Great A Man of Great Power The King of Mahishmati

Comments : In the list given by Pargitter, there is Mahābhauma, 80th king of the central Paurava dynasty at Delhi; Mahī and Bhūmi mean the same. But we cannot be certain, for the lack of other signs we can read. There is a small P added to the second letter at the top; this might make Pha, but it is hard to know if it could also form Bha. Both Mha's are arranged to look like elephants which gives visual support to the guess that a Hastināpura king is meant. There is a faint mark of a plant at one end which may be a *Sasya* sign, and an additional name of Mahābhauma was 'Ayutayus' reduced to 'Sahasrayus', or 'Sasyayus'. A number of illegible letters on the animal's body might give a better clue.



84. *Ra Ra Patri Sasha*

Tripa Shasa

(*A snake's hood below*)

Reading : Ruru Patrisasha

Ruru Tripashasa

Translation : Ruru, The King-Tamer or, Ruru The Takshaka-Tamer.

Comments : Ruru was a forest-dwelling sage. His wife Pramadwara "died of a snake-bite" (*i.e.*, abducted by the Nāgā tribals). He "revived" her to life by offering half of his life, *i.e.*, nursed her for a long time. This refers to his complaint to Takshaka and his admonition; or, the complaint might have been made to Parīkshita.

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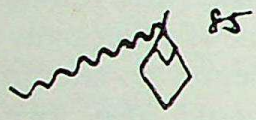
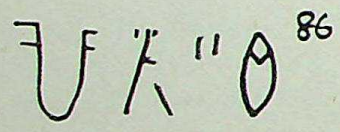
The faintly edged hood of a serpent starting from the horse's tail confirms that by Tripa or Trapa, Takshaka is meant. There is a snake on the hind leg of the horse, and may be on the floor too. The last could be the breakage mark. The best part of the seal is the double R's standing like a wedded couple, one male and the female, the latter slightly taller but marked by a bigger braid of hair behind.



85. *Papa...(broken : Papa : Child)*

Comments : Death Seal : letters "Dama" on the horse's body and the flower in the space between the letters and the horse, from the graffiti.



86. *Ppa ga yi : Ppagayi : Pragahi*

Comments : Both strings are across the front foot of the horse. If this test has any validity, the first preference will have to go to Pragahi, mentioned in 'Sāṅkhāyana Brāhmaṇa (26.4). He is considered an authority on how to complete an interrupted rite.

Other possible readings are Pragatha and Pragavas, both of Āṅgīrasa gotra, and there *are* some signals of fire just above the letter strip and two heavenly objects. But some Āṅgīrasas do not wear both strings across. Nor do Ka'syapas who wear their thread outside. The heavenly objects may be Mitra and Varuṇa, equally applicable to Pragahi. There is another possibility. Pragātha singers might have had their guild. They were unlearned and did not get a proper share of the gift in a sacrifice. Some were bards and some scribes. This could be the rite of their union.

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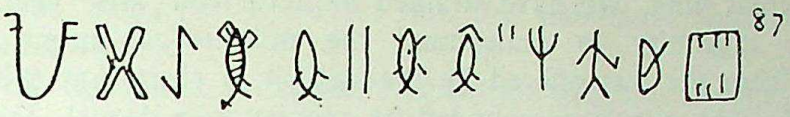
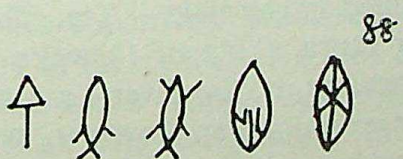


87. *I Bha Dwa Ra Ka A Shai*
Shae Sha Vrs Ga Ta Yay
Varsha Yay
Vrishi

Reading : Ibhadwaraka Ashai Shaeasha Varsha Gataye.

Translation : (Two) Door-Guards (of Dwāraka), One of Eighty Elephant Years, The Other of Eighty-Six Years

Comments : Two elephant guards have completed their 80th and 86th Year of life and their guild is celebrating their birthday, or some other rite to wish them a long life. The horse carries auspicious *Rangavalli* marks. Double meanings intended are Dwāraka, both for door and for the town; and Ibha and Ubha, 'elephant' and 'both'. Correspondingly, the last universal vowel is equipped with an end 'ay' signal which could as well be 'ayo' or 'ayau'; but even without these stretchings of the system, the dual number is communicative enough.



88. *Aikasha Wapa Shae Sha Da*
Paksha Napa

Reading: 1. Aika'sawapa 'Sae'sada : 'Sai'sada: 'Sa'sada, Ikswaku's Son, Shashāda
2. Pakshanapa Shishada : One who Ate a Hare on the Day of Parental Ceremony.

Comments : The above two readings are highly artificial and are carefully meant with malicious intent to perpetuate a boyhood scandal

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about a great king. We have strained hard to read this seal; and used our ingenuity to understand the mischievous mind of the scribe. From the test offered by Waddell, it is clear that this is a death seal. (The cup is surrounded by regular tear drops). Further, it would have been convenient to read the opening Wheel letter as Para'sa as we have done in another place; but, there was justification there, not here. Further, we have also tried to be consistent in our own test, whether the thread is beside or across the right foot, and carefully shifted the ṛishis of particular gotras who wear the thread in various ways. Had we read it the easier way, and not without some justification, we would have found at least two disciples of Vyāsa who called themselves Parā'saras, and who had a like-sounding name, *viz.*, 'Si'sair, and 'San'sapayana. But, we must pursue the distorted mind of the scribe and understand why he is using all these tricks to befuddle the mind of the simple reader

1. P sign which forms the outline of the wheel (the greatest headache for all readers—it can be read in 15 different ways), has been fully rounded, from which we are supposed to derive our Ai, the vrddhi of I, in Ikshwaku. We are to forget the V sound. Take Ksha as its natural vṛiddhi. Then go back to the normal P and read our vṛiddhi as Paksha.

2. Proceeding to the next letter, we are sure of the main letter P, but there is an embedded sign in it. It is made to look like Tri, and the stem on which it is mounted might make it Tra. Thus we have a straight and honest Patra or Putra, (king of Ikswaku realm or Son of Ikshwaku); this honest reading is, however, meant for the eye of the bereaved. On closer examination, however, we find that one line descends and the other ascends from the border of P to look like N. Thus, while the mourners read it as Aikashaputra, the more critical remember from the seal that in his boyhood, King Vikukshi had eaten a hare for food on the Paksha day, *i.e.*, Pakshapana, which episode had brought on him the permanent name of a 'Sasada'. (Ikshvāku's son Vikukshi has come down in history as 'Sa'sada). In the earlier seal, we have seen that his real

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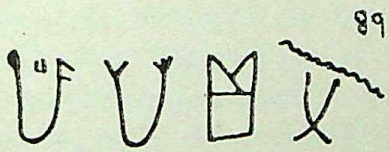
name was 'Sagaksha, doe-eyed. But, this nickname 'Shashada' stuck to him all his life.

The so called Harappan civilization was not a metropolitan civilization. There were small towns in which local kings ruled like gentlemen farmers or squires. Local scandals stuck even to princes. Nicknames were common. Privacy was unknown. Moreover, with all their outward piety and filial feeling, crown princes were eager for the death of their fathers and encouraged the scribes to indulge their *penchant* for puns and doubles entendres. The scribe who could compose such double-edged mourning seals must have been quite in demand in those days. Thus punsterhood based on syntax became the professional skill of the trade.



89. *Broken—Can be reconstructed*

'Sai Bawa Shasha Au; Shaibavāsasau

Translations: Two Citizens of Abyssinia

Comments : Contact with Abyssinia seems to be a common feature of later Harappan age. We have seen how Baka was an Abyssinian merchant of meat who had settled down in India. Mitravindā, a queen of Kṛishṇa was a 'Saibya. A few kings of India were of Abyssinian origin (*e.g.*, 'Sibi Bhagīrath). In general, not only trade but inter-marriage with Abyssianians was common. Another unnamed 'Saibya was an important general in the Mahābhārata war. It is futile to read the seal as pertaining to 'Shivis of Punjab. There is a clear Yādava Vṛishṇi mark, a conch, on the body of the horse which shows some connection with Dwāraka; we can easily imagine the maritime trade. Possibly, these were Dwāraka traders who had made Abyssinia their home. A stick is suspended from the stirrup of the horse, and one wonders if they were horse traders, a very prosperous business. It

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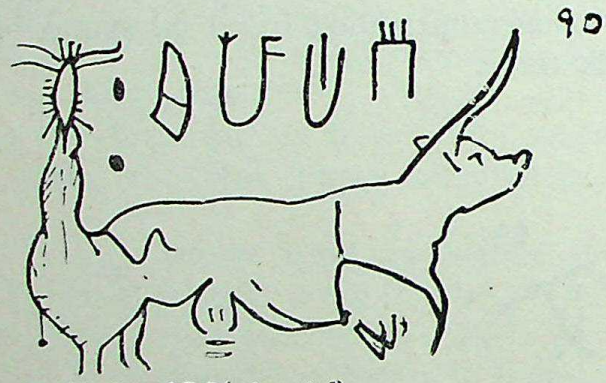
is in Dwāraka that traders, professionals and officialdom had reached a state of affluence which made them, if not exactly a bourgeoisie, at least citizen princes. It should be remembered that Kṛishṇa did not directly participate in the Mahabharata war, though his army indifferently did; and all the war-time profit must have gone to the merchants of Dwāraka, the most accessible port then. If the stirrup is iron, one wonders if Dwāraka was more prosperous than even Harappa or Mohenjodaro.



90. *Saka Ka Isha 'Srī (pictorial)*

—·—

Kasa

Nakulee Sha

Reading: 'Sakaka Ī'sa 'Sri Nakulī'sa

Translation: 'Srī Nakulī'sa, the God of the Scythians

Comments: We hold our breath in holy dread. This is the advent of Nakulī'sa (later known as Lakulī'sa), the great heterodox cult from which issued the ecstatic cults of Pās'upatas, Kālamukhas, Bhairavas and Kāpālins; and on many other cults, Nākulī'sha left his indelible mark. The great cult has obscure origins. A Harvard Indologist and Sanskritist has recently suggested that its origins may be found in Hercules cult, with whose name he bears a close resemblance. (It was on this hint that we have already suggested that the Greek 'Her', 'Hra, Dra and similar sounds might have been of common origin with the Indian alphabet Lhr, which is a vowel. Dravidian Raḷa-Kuḷa also seem to share some common features. Even today,

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they exist in Kerala). Whether Nakulī'sha had himself come to India is not a very relevant question. But the origin of the cult has been on record here. It came from the Scythians; and the scythians might have borrowed the cult from Phoenicians. There are two more seals of the same cult here; but this we consider probably the earlier, may be the earliest. It is not merely because it mentions Nakulī'sha's origin, but because the scribe is afraid about the mention of his name, and represents him with a pictorial, exactly as the Caballist was afraid to mention Jehova and called him the 'Tetragrammation' YHVH). For many things, India owes a great debt of gratitude to his cult. Against the over-elaborated ritualism, Nakuli'sa raised the 'Sahaja' heterodoxy and acted as a moderating influence, besides giving an elaborated rationale of the ecstatic life. What exactly he taught is known as Pā'śupata philosophy. But its original forms we do not know. But it must be understood beyond the later accretions, that this cult raised the banner of revolt against the purely ritualistic. It obtained its best adherents among the poorest of the poor. It was the source of our pre-Hellenistic art. It brought a dignity to the professional classes. And as the political fragmentation commenced with the weakening of the central Delhi power, it remained as a *cultural* bedrock to preserve the cultural unity of India.

The seal too is most unorthodox. The animal is certainly not a horse. It rather looks like a tiger without stripes; may be, a bull; riding on his back a powerful mongoose (Nakula) has raised his full body to grasp the fish-like 'Sa. The aim is mystification. Only those who know should be able to recognise the Nakula ('mongoose') as suggestive of his name. His powerful legs are firmly anchored on the bull and dissolve into it,—clearly an impressionistic piece. Equally impressionistic is the body of a Yogi, hanging across the animal (simultaneously its penis)—his face and matted hair clearly visible, his muscular shoulders limp, but his torso vanishing on the body of the animal. A picture in minitature that would have made a Picasso proud.

The records of the Nakuli'sa cult began to reappear in art-forms and inscriptions. (Kapaṭrāḷa : Karnataka Lākuḷa 'Saivara Itihasa, Chap. II). But the cult belonged to the Harappan age, a melting pot

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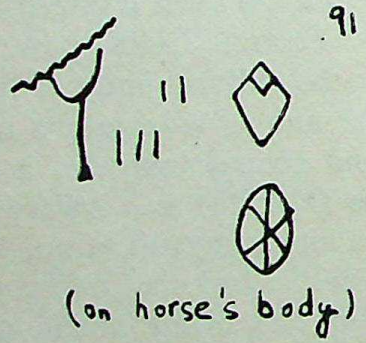
of heterodoxies. This was not even imagined, in spite of the cultists' claim that their thought was promulgated by 'Siva' in 'Anādi' time. Here is a documentary evidence that it is no idle boast. Harappan age is what is described in mythologies as Dwāpara, in fact, Pargitter even proves that Mahābhārata war marks the end of the Dwāpara age and after that, there is a long period of 1050 years in which the expressive forms of civilized life, institutions, art, social intermixture, became dormant. But these cults remained underground, annexed the least expressive parts of society, enriched their lives, and re-emerged in expressive parts of society, enriched their lives, and re-emerged in expressive ways after the decline of Buddhism when people had the need for another life asserting principle. In the beginning, Nakulī'sa was accepted as a Nāga. But soon he was Vedicised, as seen in the '*Satrudriya* which forms a popular section of Yajurveda. Therefore, our conjecture is that the cult came to India a few decades before Vyāsa.



91. *Ppa Tri Ka*—(*br.*): *patrika*—*Vessel-Makers/Actors/Seal-Makers*
(On horse's neck/heel) : Pati: Leader/Foreman

Comments: The seal can also be read as Papa Atrika Pati and consi-
Trika
dered as pertaining to an association of three men of the heterodox Atri cult, or of the heterodox Trika cult, led by their leader. We have the purānic record of the rise of Dattātreya cult-and Dattātreya was the teacher of local Indian version of Nakulī'sa's type of heterodoxy,

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if we are to trust Mārkaṇḍeya purāṇa. (Other seals in this very lot record its rise, such as the seal of Marka).

However, we prefer to ascribe this seal to either vessel-makers or to seal-makers on the evidence of a 'pan' mark just above the tail of the horse. As this is triangular in shape, the actors are ruled out. On the contrary, the metal-workers have a slight advantage over the seal-makers, because the edge of the pan is bent. The picture of the round pan-like seal block with stock letters carved on it is so falt and thin that Wheeler has mistaken it as a bronze mirror (see Plate XXV B., in Sir Mortimer Wheeler's *Indus Civilization*, 1968). Moreover, this pan is triangular in shape. The bronze vessel makers must have made lots of money. The word 'Pati' on horse's neck suggests that the leader or foreman of pot and pan makers performed a rite on behalf of his guild. Such guilds have a long history and have been mentioned in inscriptions as "Parase's", or Parishads of professionals. In fact, the wheel-like 'Pati' can be read as 'Paraṣa', or Parishad. A part of the seal is broken, but the three-towered gate is depicted on the graffiti and hence we can reasonably guess that these metal workers belong to Dwāraka, the place where professionals became prosperous during the Mahābhārata war. (For comparison with Dwāraka, read the description of 17th c. Surat, as given by William Hawkins, the emissary of the East India Company: "On this side of the city lieth open to the Green, but on all other parts is ditched and fenced with thick hedges, having three gates..." quoted in 'Some Notes on John Hawkins' H.G. Rawlinson, *Bhandarkar Commemoration Volume*, Poona, Bhori, 1917, p. 282).

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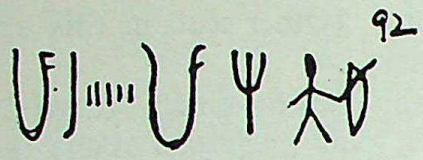

92. *Dwā Ra Ka Yo Pañcha Pa* $\frac{Yi}{Ha}$

Reading : Dwārakayo Panchapaha $\frac{}{Yi}$

Translation : Five Princes/Judges/Harijan Foremen of Dwāraka Five Carpenters (Door-Makers of Dwaraka (doubles entendres).

Comments : In the absence of any further indications, it is safest to take the last reading as the most suited. But all others have equal claim. The horse itself is curious. It appears to be faceless. On its body are two clear letters, Tasha followed by a disproportionate Da. But these can be interpreted as sign of imprecation, Ta for a cross, 'Sa for an arrow, 'Da' for a restraining rope. The buttock plug shaped like a carpenter's tool suggests the imprecatory nature of the seal. A snake is let loose near the hind feet, and the long mark in front may not be a breakage mark, but a stick or a lance with a wide head. The forelegs are fastened by a nail driven into both, to block his 'progress'.

Budging by all these signs on the horse, one could justifiably guess that there was some bitter dispute between a rich man who built a house but did not pay his carpenters to their entire satisfaction; the matter was taken to the guild of carpenters. The guild council of five decided against the owner after considering all evidence. But unsupported by written documents they had no legal remedy and decided to resort to religious ritual as a last remedy. They performed some ceremony, representing the house-owner as "faceless", *i.e.*, dishonoured, and drew other curses on him. "Facelessness" is an idiom surviving in India to this day in almost all languages and means what its counterpart does in English, *i.e.*, 'losing face'.

Our interpretation covers all aspects of the seal; but this does not mean that it is final.

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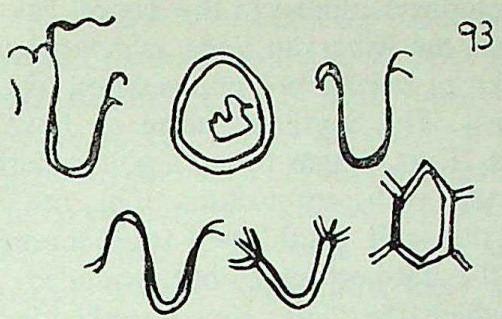

93. (*Pictographic*) *Na Ga Bashaka Nakashsa*

———

Shakana

(*ignoring top 'Siva snake mark*)

(*next two lines: 'Sa Kka 'Saga*

—— —-—

Kaka 'Saka

—-—

'Sa'sna

Reading: Naka'sa 'Sakka 'Sa'saga/'Sakkashaa/Shakkashishna

———-———-—

Shakkashasana

Translation: Nakuli'sa, the Snake-Charmer, the Ruler of 'Sakas

———————

the Phallus Mark

Comments: All letters are written in serpentine curves. We could read the third letter as 'Siva very clearly; but the snake-like mark issuing from the left arm and going all the way upto the edge of the seal can hardly be ignored; it is an 'N' sign. Below it is the inverted W sign mounted on the cup of 'A'. On the other arm is ''Sa'. The natural reading is ''Sakana', but taking the hint from the previous seal in which a deliberate attempt was made to hide his name in the earlier days of the advent of Nakulī'sa cult, we have read it obversely as Naka'sa (Nakulī'sa). We read the last letter without strain as 'Sa'sna', because it ends in a long N sign issuing from the ''Sa' sign mounted on cuplike 'A'. This might suggest that the Nakulī'sa cult revived the pre-Harappan phallic worship which was still surviving among the Nāgā tribes of Himalayas, described in Vedas as 'Si'sna-devas' (Ṛg. 2.3.82). The word 'snake-charmer' is very important. It suggests that the new cult took root among the Nāgās first; all along they

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had been snake and tree-worshippers almost to the day of Takshaka (See Ayyappa seal No. 30). Even the Atharvan Veda which originated mostly from Nāgā tribes, talks of curing poisonous bites, *etc.*, but hardly mentions snake-hypnosis. The Scythians seem to have this art of 'controlling' the serpents. Thus, Nāgās found a god superior to theirs and adopted the new cult with enthusiasm. On the other hand, it could mean that the cult established itself among the Nāgās (Nāgava'saka). As for the flat-bottomed but rounded linga suggested by the B sign (in which the "Sak' sign is embedded), we could guess that like the Middle Eastern countries, the early lingas of the Nakulī'sa cult were squarish. Even today, such liṅgas are given special importance. The word Chokkaliṅga, in the South, is derived originally from Chatushka Liṅga,—the square liṅga (Ka-a-ba of Mecca seems to be a relique of the pre-Islamic worship) But here, a compromise between the original round linga and the new cubic one is reached by rounding off the edges. It would be tempting to describe the early Garuḍa chapters of the Ādi-Parvan of MBh as a record of the arrival of either Nakulī'sa or Ayyappan; but this seal adds nothing in its support, because the 'Shak' bird is definitely not a Garuḍa, but either a swan or a duck. But this seal clarifies one important issue. Nakulī'sa is represented as having a stick in his hand; there is no stick anywhere in the seal. Nor is a stick seen in the earlier seal of Nakulī'sa No. 90. The symbol is clear. The stick was added later as knowledge about cult characteristics and analogy of Hercules began to be more apparent. For Indians who had the poetic image of 'mongoose' as an enemy of snake, Nakulī'sa appeared their own. They did not go deep into the various forms of Hercules, Dracula, and other forms of the Asiatic cults. The fact that 'Sakas or Scythians worshipped a god superior to their own was enough to start off a new acculturation, which must have made the Nāgā tribals of Kurujāṅgala, Kashmir and Himachal-pradesh into profound thinkers of the Pa'su-Pā'sa and pati philosophy, and prepared the ground for the great Kashmir 'Saivism, the Trika philosophy. The seal definitely shows a rope holding the hind quarters of the horse, clearly symbolic, because it was not needed there,—the philosophy of Pā'sa. At the end of the rope is an eye and its pupil symbolising god

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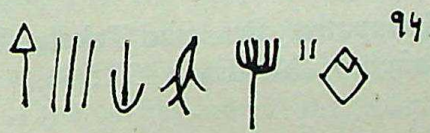
restraining the Pa'su soul, the uncultivated human soul. This symbol in the graffito has an echo in the 90th seal in which Nakuli'sa is holding the fish-like human soul tightly in his mouth. We have to see this in the background of the political situation. During the Mahābhārata war, the Nāgās of Kuru-Jāṅgala (who did not participate) had become powerful and lawless. If the Shamika-Shakti story means anything, these were Naga gurus, angered by Parikshit's insulting behaviour. Young 'Sakti must have whipped up a good deal of resentment, bravado and adventurism among the simple Nāgā folks; this must have led to looting, arson and rapine on the borders of the central Kuru kingdom, judging by the many complaints received, (*e.g.*, Ruru seal 84). But the organised attack on the ill-equipped Nāgās by the Central power of Parikshita, resulting in the liquidation of Takshaka's lieutenants and brothers, must have broken the self-confidence of the Nāgās. Even Takshaka was saved only by the good will of Parikshita. He had his personal vendetta by sending his assasins and poisoned apples. But that could hardly have built up either his prestige or the self-confidence of the Nāgās. They disowned the priest-king Takshaka and adopted the non-political intellectual faith of an absentee teacher, Nakuli'sa, and settled down to a peaceful life of new worship—the faith that god rules the ambitions of the fretful soul.



94. *Papa Hae* 'Sa *Ka* $\frac{Tri}{Trisa}$ *Da*

Reading: Papahai'saka Trasada

Translation: Trasadasyu who Shuns Evil (Sin)

Comments: This is our last Trasadasyu seal. Its apologetic tone, in conjunction with the graffito which represents a chariot, suggests that

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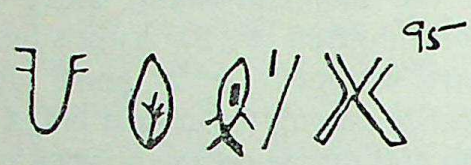
this is a seal of his early youth, almost after the episode of the judgment of Ikshwāku king on the death of the child, when protests were raging around that he had told a lie and kings side with each other.



95. *Ta G 'Sa Prah Ra*
—-— —-
Ppah Sha

Reading: Taksha Prahra
———
Ppasha

Translation: Taksha of Assam
———————————
Taksha Naga

Comments: Obviously, this is not Takshaka of Kurujāṅgala, the assasin of Parīkshita. This Taksha is either from Assam or from Nāgāland. Further, he is a Brahmin of some kind, may be an old bachelor. There is a mark of an inverted As'wattha leaf on the horse. Obviously, he is Takshan, or Taksha Vai'sāli, mentioned in *'S 'tapatha Bra.*, who taught lady Aruṇi. He took part in Janamejaya's sacrifice and was the son of Viraja. The only thread the horse has is across the foreleg.

Takshan is mentioned in Shatapatha Bra. and Taksha Vai'sāli in Atharvan Veda (7.10.29) and pañchavin'sa Bra. (25.15.3).

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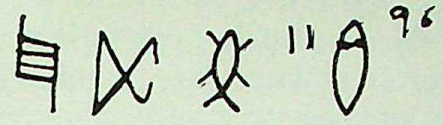

96. *Para 'Sae Ma Hai*
Bhai

Reading: Para Shaimahai
Shaimabyai

Translation: For Shaima, A Parā'sara
A Brahmin

2. ——— Para'sai Mahaye: For (N Behalf of) the Reigning King of Persia

Or

(May the Benefit of this Rite Go) To the Reigning King of Persia.

Comments: We cannot decide whether it is 'S'ameeka or 'Sambuka, because their patronyms are not known. Both strings are firmly across. 'Samika is ruled out, because as an Āṅgirasa, he would not worn both threads outside. Other Kshatriyas and Yādavas are also ruled out, such as 'Sama; Ayu's son, 'Samin, the son of 'Sūra; also other Rākshasas like 'Sambara. We have to decide between 'Sambuka and 'Sampaka, or 'Samyaka; the latter was a Brahmin. This is one probability. But We cannot easily rule out 'Sambuka also. He was a 'S'ūdra and is reported to have been killed by Rāma; generally Rāmayaṇa is read as excellent poetry, but is most unreliable as history according to Pargitter. 'S'ambuka might have worn a thread in the style of the earlier ethos; but, Rāma might have acted, if at all, based on the new. See our comments on the Paila Bashkali seal 81 and 82.

(2) The other reading suggests that an emissary performed a sacrifice on behalf of the King of Persia, but the seal remained in India.

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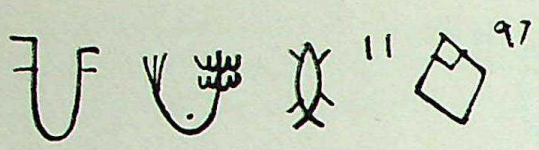

97. *A Pa Ka 'Sai K Hai Ka Yi*

Reading : Apaka'sai Haihaikayi

Apaka Ah'sāi Haihaikayi

Translation : Haihaika (Vitahavya), Desirous of Vanquishing The Kā'si King Haihaika, Desirous of Owning Apaka (Doab)

Comments : This is the famous Vitahavya, the son of the Pāñchāla Tālajaṅgha. (Some purāṇas mention him as the brother of Tālajaṅgha. But he is considered son by Pargitter and the fifth king from the great Sahasrārjuna). In one of his onslaughts, Tālajaṅgha had been worsted by Para'surāma. In the flight of the family, Vitihavya recovered Tālajaṅgha from a forest and nursed him. He established himself at Māhishmati, swept over Ayodhya and frequently attacked Kā'si. In spite of repeated campaigns, he did not succeed in taking Kā'si, and the bitter war of attrition continued, until Divodasa II of Kā'si humbled him and he had to flee. He took asylum in Bhṛigu Ā'srama where he was followed by Pratardana, Divodasa's son. In the meantime, he had become a Brahman and worn a thread. Pratardana left him whole by demanding that he remain a Kshatriya. But Vitahavya persisted in holy occupations, left his kingdom to be ruled by his son, and became a famed Brhmaṛishi.

This seal records one of his rites in the days of his ambition to rule over the fertile Gangetic doab. Apakā'si is the lower Kā'si kingdom. The pun is on Ā'sa to desire; Kā'sha, seems to be a form of Kaṅksha.

The graffiti presents a curious problem. It is clearly the holy symbol of modern Nāgari, Om. The 3-like 'A' has a flag stuck in its notch and is certainly not Harappan script. Had the new script commenced evolving in Vitihotra's days? His is 36th in Pargitter's synchronistic list, *i.e.*, about 1200 years before the Mahābhārata war. Or, was this script not favoured by the scribes who got no scope in it for their abominable puns, and had admitted only a couple of holy symbols like Om and 'Srī ? Was Nāgari then only a Nāga script not

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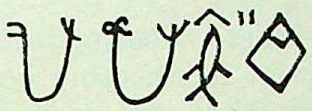
obtaining the sanctity of a religious script ?... Or possibly, because all the Brahmin Nāgari alphabets could not be accommodated on the little seal-block, and therefore, the older script lived only on seals but already replaced by a phonetically perfect Brāhmi ?

98



98. *Para Shai Ma Wama Mahyi*
——— ———
Kama Mahayi

Reading : Parashaiva Mahayi
—
Ka

Translation : (Temple of) The Supreme Shiva
————————
The one and only Pārā'sa (Ra) *i.e.*, Vyāsa.

Comments : Observation of the third mark should convince any one that the scribe has first made a spelling mistake, and written Kaka for Kāma, then over-written the Ma sign and thickened a line of Ka hoping to make it look like Wa. To respect his hope, and read 'Parā'sariva' for Para'saika. It may be true that hundreds of pupils of Vyāsa called themselves Pārā'saras, probably because he was recent, and the mention of Pārā'sara meant a higher prestige. For instance, we have seen how Bashkali in his humbler seal (No. 81) called himself Iyasaga, (Vyāsa's pupil), but as his prestige grew, calls himself 'Paraisha' (Pārā'sara's pupil), albeit, punningly true, because Vyāsa is Parā'sara's son. For contemporaries, the real ṛishi was the father. (See Seal 82). Hence, it is not impossible that some disgusted pupil of Vyāsa might have performed the Guru'srāddha (commemorative rite of his teacher) and taken the opportunity to declare others as fake. But our alternative reading is supported by two other evidence.

(1) The graffito at the centre of the horse's body shows a temple. In other words, The First Temple in India is built and this is its concenseration ceremony. It is after the Greek or Cretan Model. It

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Definitely is a 'Siva Temple, Though the image inside is not Clearly Visible. The Vedic rite, till then, had been different. It was the worship of the fire slab after the Persian model, though, as the Trasadasyu seals show, heavenly bodies now and then, were considered Mitra and Varuṇa. With the construction of a temple came a new class of Pūjakas as against Yājakas; the Yajña, the collective rite makes room for individualist temple worship after the arrival of Nakulī'sa cult.

(2) That it is a 'Siva temple is easily proved. Starting from the visible thigh of the horse emerges the powerful and macabre body of a mongoose, bending at right angle and holding the roof of the temple which also is shaped like an eye. That is Nakulī'sa, considered by the purāṇas as the avatāra of 'Siva for the Kali age. Much before the birth of Tāntrism, which is entirely the product of the Āgamic literature which itself is the Indian development of Nakulī'sa philosophy, Nakuḷī'sa was considered the divine element in man, controlling his actions, physiologically associated with the spinal chord,—described in the Gītā, a later work, as Ishwara, indwelling all creatures and governing their thought and deed like puppets on the Catherine wheel. Nakulī'sa could not but have been the god of Nāgās first. (See comments on Seal 90 and 93, the other Nakulī'sa seals).

This is re-inforced by a dead body, the Pas'u, the human being who is dead without the governing power, in the dead body limply hanging on to the horse along the line of the fore-leg. We have been familiarised with this image of the limp human body in Seal 90. In other words, The Cult is Institutionalised, a temple is raised.

Now, we can better appreciate the scribe's confusion. He misspelt the third letter, and abominably mounted Ma on the arm of the cup-shaped A, never done by scribes, because the seal had gone dry when the owner came to claim it and discovered the mistake. The mistake occurred because the scribe had never heard a building named Temple.

It is neither anomalous nor unique that a new worship of *pūja* should be consecrated by the old rite of a Yajña. It was thus that Christmas was established by synchronising the birth-day of Christ with the birthday of the earlier pagan gods, Adonis and Dionysus,

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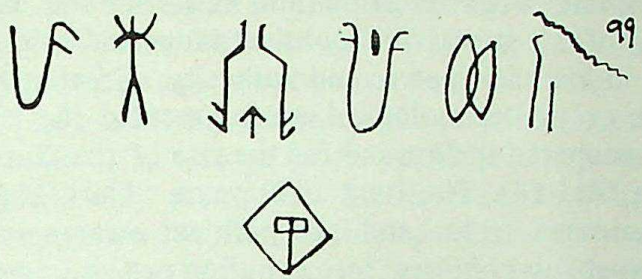
seven days before Jesus was actually born, as pointed out by Sir James Frazer his *The Golden Bough.*



99. *A I Ppa Ai 'Sa'sa Tra Ya;*
(*next line, a seal*): *Da Tha*
—
Pa

Readings: Ayippa Aisa'a Traya; Datta/Aippa'sa'sa Traya: Datta
—
P
—
Patha

Translation: (1) Ayyappa; The Three-Fold God : Datta
(2) Three Wine Pressers : From (Dakshiṇa) Patha, *i.e.*, South.

Comments: The latter reading is based on the word "Apyayaka" employed in the *Soma* sacrifice; but this reading is most objectionable because we will have to read it as "Sons of Apyaka" and still we will have that unnecessary and inexplicable double Sa-'Sa on our hand to explain. Further, the graffiti goes totally against this reading.

The first reading is the most natural. The doubtful point is the very expansive and angular P letter which we prefer to read as D. But such a D exists in Later Harappan, as given by Dr. Rao in his earlier article in the Andhra University Journal, although it is eliminated in his mimeographed LWIVP. It is obvious why the scribe used this D; it leaves space enough for the scribe to embed in it a Th.

The only possibly inference is, Another Non-Vedic God is Institutionalised and Adopted, *viz.*, Ayyappan-Datta. Both gods, one established in the North and Vidarbha, the other in farthest Kerala,

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were names of one god only; only Datta retained the feature of being the synthesis of three gods, the Am'sas as well as the Aishya—segment and power. Plunged in anarchy by the collapse of the central power, the earlier expensive ritualism lost a part of its authority and new gods began to come as centres of cultural authority and worship. Datta is the guru of all gurus. The political kings and priest-kings like Takshaka had all lost their power and authority. Greater intellectual awareness during a pre-technological era fragmented the cultural life of India and prepared the ground for the rise of the Guru cult. (See Comments on Seal 14). The long 1050 years "Dark Age" of India in which increased tribal and geo-political awareness of the people divided the vast sub-continent into a million petty squirearchies and princedoms. Travel and communication became almost impossible. But only gurus and sutas could still travel and spread new cults.

It is difficult to know the origins or Dattātreya. But we can dependably conjecture that he is a local product unlike Nakuli'sa who came from 'Sakas or Scyths and established his authority over Nāgās first. (Comments on Seal 90 and Seal 93). Had Datta cult come a little earlier, he would have become incorporated in the Vedas. But the next best was done,—he was identified with a Vedic ṛishi, Atri as his son; and in the South, as 'Siva's son Kumāraswāmi. Already, Vyāsa and his pupil had completed their work of compiling Vedas and were dead. Datta's name does not figure there. Nakulī'sa's name too does not,—but the Yajus phrase in 'Satarudrīya, "Pa'sūnāma Pataye", lended with the Ṛig., "Namaste Rudra Manyava..." could made his identification with Rudra-'Siva easy. There is no doubt that Nakulī'sa was an earlier god, because in this seal, the graffiti show three gods, and at the least, we can recognise the last,—Nakulī'sa, a mongoose. Just below him is the dead man, the Pa'su, all along the hind thigh, just ending with the Nakuli'sa figure.

In keeping with the description, Aisha Traya, the graffiti show two other gods, though it is difficult to identify them. The central god may be Vishṇu-Urugaya, because he is expansive (Vishṇu) and is walking vigorously in powerful strides (Urugaya). The first is not clearly featured and little can be said about him. Possibly he has a

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rounded belly, suggesting that he is either Brahma Prajāpati, or less aptly, Indra. But he cannot be Varuṇa, who by this time, must have been identified as a foreign deity, and on his way out. Varuṇa was king and identified with Ṛita (the universal law and truth) as finely argued by P. Time of Tubingen, ('King Varuṇa', incl. in *German Scholars on India*, Vāraṇā'si, Chowkhamba, 1973). And both kingship and Ṛita were already outmoded in the dark age.

The graffiti is evidence of the fact that by the time this seal was made, Nakulī'sa was no longer considered a 'Saka god, but completely identified with the Vedic Rudra-Pa'supati. The new worship and philosophy were so firmly established that it was natural to give a picture of Nakulī'sa in place of Rudra. He was Indianised.

About 50 years ago a Nārāyaṇacharya of Mangalore started a lively controversy as to whether Datta had three heads or one. Even earlier than this, Tembe Mahārāj, reputed as a devotee of Datta, and later considered as an Avatar of Datta, had quietly established a temple of one-headed Datta. The main argument of this school was that Datta was the son of Atri and ignorant people were misled by the title Dattatreya and had given him three heads. Now we have a positive answer. The seal uses the latter 'Tri' almost as an icon of Datta and in mounting Ta on 'Ra' makes it appear like a three-headed god. Such oconic use of lettering is quite common in the seals (See our comments on Ṛiṛi Seal No. 84, on Nakulī'sa Liṅga in No. 93, and many Dwāraka seals, as well as No. 83, in which Ma letter is made to look like an elephant to suggest Hastināpur). Therefore, the least we can learn from this seal is that Datta was originally conceived as three-headed or, there are strong possibilities to believe so.

The later history of Dattatreya (on whom this writer's book remains unpublished still though written nearly 10 years ago) is briefly told. Datta legend grew in power. It partly replaced Nakulī'sa cult by incorporating his main features, *viz.*, heterodoxy, intellectuality, anti-ritualism, Sahaja philosophy, *etc.* It annexed a large number of followers by being closer to Vedicism in an intellectualised form; but the common people continued to be acculturated by the Nakulī'sa cult as suggested by increased numbers of Nāga, Pā'supata, Kāpālika, Avadhūta, Nāthasiddha, Avaghaḍa sadhus. The heterodoxy of Datta

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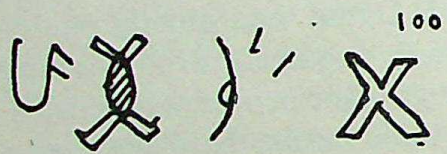
cult mainly liberalised the upper classes by a via media between Vedism and Heterodoxy. Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa makes him wholly heterodox; but Brahma Purāṇa makes him both Vedic and heterodox, humanistic. These gods became grists for protest against Buddhism a thousand years later, and grew in power after its decline. Datta shows fewer cult characteristics; Nakuli'sa cult was divided and subdivided according to various disciplines enjoined by later teachers. Nakulisa cult made greater contribution to Indian art; Datta cult to thought. As for Ayyappan, he begot no special bunch of devotees, but, like Datta, obtained followers among all sections, even "Muslims", *i.e.*, Pre-Islamic Middle-East settlers in India. All three are images of great caste re-conciliation. There were efforts to Vishnuise Datta too.



100. *T U G(P)Ra Vrs' I*

Reading : Tug(P)Ra Ṛishi Sage Tug(A)Ra

Comments : (1) Could be the Vedic ṛishi, the compose of 6.20.8; 10.49.4 of Ṛig.

(2) Tugra is the father of Bhujyu. Such names are common on the coastal side of Koṅkan and Karnatak. Disappointed with his son, Tugra sent Bhuju to Paradvīpa, a distant island. The ship was wrecked in a storm, but Bhujyu prayed to the A'srini gods, and he was saved. This is the subject of Ṛig., 1.116, 3-5; 117.14.15; 119.4). Obviously, fisher-folk.

B. The above reading is based on considering the 2nd letter as G; but top cross line is so close to the edge that it could only be a fold of the seal produced while drying, or cutting. Without this line it reads : *Sthayara Ṛishi*, or *Vrshi*. The former means that an old rshi died and this marks his last rite. There are two with such names as Sthavira Kouṇḍinya and Sthavira 'Sākalya.

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If *Vrshi is Read*, we get an interesting meaning. An old prostitute dies and her former lovers give her a cremation by subscription.

But this last reading is belied by the graffiti which employ two letters, "Maha". Hence we prefer the fisherman Tugra. Mahaṛishi broadly means, a rishi of the lower caste.

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Appendix

The Origin of Playing Cards—A Note

Those who are familiar with the Harappan script will not only recognise Harappan signs or Playing cards but can give a reasonable hypothesis of the origin of the game.

"Spades" sign in Harappan is "Dwa". "Dimonds" is "Pa". If we ignore the space-filling, "Clubs" sign is "Kaa". "Hearts" is the leaf-logograph for "Ashwa" which Dr. S.R. Rao, the savant of the Harappan Script, derives from "Ashwattha". "Sh" in colloquial (Prakriti) becomes "ha" and is merely aspirated. Thus, it is equivalent of "Ahwa". It was so pronounced before Sanskritisation began.

The game is a war in which kings, queens, ministers, platoon leaders (from ten soldiers to the sole warrior) participate. Dr. P.N. Chopra has quoted Abul Fazal's statemen that the game was an invention of ancient Ṛishis. In what Vedic war did Dwaa, Pa, Kaa and Ahwa participate which made so prolonged an impact as to originate a game? The "Daasharaajni" (The war of ten kings) of course. It started with the Pāñchāla (Pa) king Haihaya's attack on Kashi (Kaa) in his eagerness to possess the Gangetic Doab. He was supported by Ayōdhya kings (Awadha-Ahwa or Awa, in Prakrit). A number of Yadus of Dwarka (Dwaa), who had set up kingdoms at Māhishmatī and elsewhere, joined the fray. The war lasted through nearly ten generations. It ended when Divodasa, the king of Kashi routed Veetahavya, the king of Ayōdhya. The smaller conflicts continued for two more generations.

By Pargiter's average, the war began in B.C. 2500, the last years of Haihaya's reign. The two colours, black and red refer to kings of Lunar and Solar races. The war began as a dispute between two lunar kings, Pāñchālas and Kashis; with other kings joining, there

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seems to have been a treaty between them. The war Lunar Kings developed as one between the Lunar and Solar alliances. Though the central power at Hastināpur did not directly intervene, it played a moderating role, and hence the concept of the "Trump" (Hukum-Mandate).

My friend, Mr. K.P. Rao, a versabile genius and puranic scholar cum computer Technologist, corroborates this theory and points out that the original Indian card game was composed of ten cards printed on thin marble, round in shape.

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